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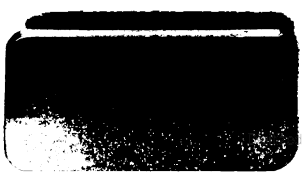

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WITH THE

FOURTH NEW ZEALAND ROUGH RIDERS.

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TO

COLONEL GREY,

OUR BRIGADIER,

A SOLDIER AND A WHITE MAN,

I RESPECTFULLY DEDICATE THIS BOOK.

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PREFACE.

I HAVE endeavoured, in the present work, to place before the public a complete and reliable account of the FOURTH CONTINGENT'S doings in SOUTH AFRICA. As a member of the Contingent I passed through the sixteen months' active service without having once been "off duty;" and this personal experience I have supplemented with information obtained from various authentic sources, at the expense of considerable labour.

In undertaking this work I have received kindly assurance of assistance from numbers of my old comrades, to whom I am exceedingly grateful. For direct assistance I am pleased to acknowledge my indebtedness to Lieut.-Colonel A. Bauchop, C.M.G., Capt. R. J. S. Seddon, Lieut. E. Jolly, and Messrs. D. R. Corson and D. Bowie—all of the Fourth—and to Mr. John M. Nicolson and Mr. John Melville.

Should this book meet with the approval of ex-members of the old regiment, I shall feel amply compensated for the time and labour spent in its compilation.

JAMES G. HARLE MOORE.

DUNEDIN, JANUARY 28, 1906.

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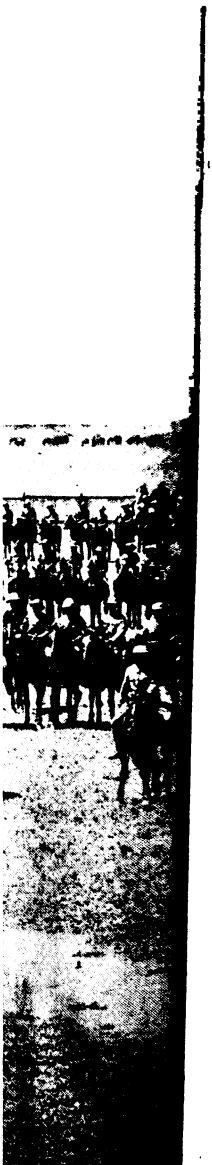

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INTRODUCTION.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH, TAKEN FROM THE OTAGO DAILY TIMES.

The genesis of the Fourth Contingent affords a somewhat remarkable example of the fact that the resources of the British people. here as elsewhere, rarely become manifest until that point has been reached when, according to superficial observation, these resources are almost, if not absolutely, exhausted. It is not likely that the magnificent effort which the public of Otago and Southland had made to raise what was happily termed a "Patriotic Fund" for the relief of the sufferers from the war in South Africa will soon be forgotten. The money had streamed in from all quarters. At the end of January a sum of £6000 was in the hands of the treasurer; and it was certain the sum would be materially augmented by sums, collected in various districts, being submitted to the central treasurer. It was expected the contribution would total £10,000. Chiefly because so much had been done, it was commonly felt that not much more could be accomplished, unless circumstances arose which demanded that additional sacrifices should be made. Some time earlier in the month the Otago Daily Times had strongly advocated and started a fund for the purpose of providing remounts for our Contingents, the urgent need of which has never been seriously questioned. The Third Contingent was in process of formation in Canterbury; and on Monday, the 30th of January, a public meeting, convened by the Mayor (Mr R. Chisholm), was held in the Town Hall for the purpose practically of considering three questions:—

1. The advisability of Otago's joining in the movement for sending a third Contingent to South Africa.
2. The best means for augmenting the fund for providing remounts for the New Zealand Contingents.
3. The best means of augmenting the "More Horses" Fund for Imperial and other purposes.

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How poor the prospect of a strong, exceptionally well equipped—it has been called the "Dandy Fourth"—Contingent being sent may be judged from the fact that the large, very enthusiastic, representative meeting, containing a number of young men anxious to volunteer, after free discussion and full deliberation, adopted a resolution in these terms:—"That the Province of Otago, having contributed very largely to the Patriotic Fund, and that this meeting having affirmed that the provision of remounts for the New Zealand Contingent is now of primary importance, regrets its inability to join in the expense of despatching a third Contingent." That may be said to have settled the question of the Third Contingent as far as Otago was concerned; and though it was duly despatched from Lyttelton, its only connexion with Otago exists in the sympathy which all good colonists feel towards the sons of the Empire who have left its shores. No material aid was directly accorded from Otago or Southland—at the time—to the first section of New Zealand's Rough Riders. Logically, therefore, of course there should have been no "Fourth" Contingent; but, happily, patriotism is vastly superior to logic, as events have proved. The more active functions of the Patriotic Fund Committee ceased. It was the generally expressed opinion of citizens that there was no need whatever for a fourth Contingent, and that the efforts of the public should be directed solely to the question of supplying remounts; or, as the Premier, who took a different view, characterised it, "to sending barebacked horses instead of fully-equipped, mounted fighting men."

Having thus shown how unlikely it was that a first-class body of mounted fighting men—New Zealand's fittest, bravest, best (of course being such in common with those who have gone, and with those who are to follow, from our tight little island colony)—it is well to take some pains to show how the apparently impossible has been accomplished. Of its accomplishment there were, at the send-off, hosts of enthusiastic witnesses. But it may not be amiss, first of all, to explain how the name "Rough Riders" came to be applied to these Contingents. The Premier thinks there is something in a name, and, accordingly, expressed a strong opinion that we should not accept the title of "Bushmen," which had been adopted in Australia. The reason for his opinions was that the Bushmen in Africa are a little people without being exceeding wise. In fact, he said the Bushmen of Africa, where our people are going, are something considerably less than the "mean white" of America. They are people held in contempt; and he objected to our men starting with a name that would suggest anything but the respect he was quite sure they would be entitled to. As they were not regularly trained troops,

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and were to be good riders ready for rough work, he thought they should be called "Rough Riders," and expressed the hope that they would be particularly rough on the enemy. Accordingly the name was adopted, and under it the Third and the Fourth Contingents have been raised.

But here we have now to deal with the Fourth Contingent only, and how it came into being when the prospect was well-nigh hopeless, and, under the fostering care of a most able and extraordinarily energetic Committee, has developed until, the time being ripe and the corps fully organised, "our boys" left us, amidst enthusiastic demonstrations of sympathy, loyalty, and patriotism as have never before been witnessed in the colony.

The Premier (the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon) arrived in Dunedin the day after the public meeting had decided against further effort, save in the matter of providing remounts; and that evening Messrs J. F. M. Fraser and W. A. Shields interviewed the Ministers of the Crown who had assembled in this city, and next day presented to the General Committee a report of an interview, stating that, "In the Premier's opinion, there was no necessity in the meantime to send remounts, and that money and energy would be better employed if mounted men were sent to the Transvaal." On the following morning the Ministers left Dunedin for Invercargill, and on the way down, acting upon instructions given, a representative of this paper interviewed the Premier upon the question; and, among other things, he said: "It is my most earnest desire to prevent any division, and, if possible, to concentrate and fix our efforts, which should be directed, in my opinion, to sending more fully-equipped, mounted fighting men. One of the chief deficiencies of the British Army is clearly the want of mounted men. That has been apparent from the first. We have the men here, and we have the horses, and we have the money; and I am fully assured that, this being pointed out, there will be the same generous response as to the other calls made. Christchurch, Wanganui, Wellington, even little Westland, are all sending their quota of men, and providing the men, equipping them, and paying for the transport of them and their horses. Why should Otago hold back? In this district, as I have been passing along, men have come forward offering to go, and asking if it is possible for them to be taken. The answer to this should come in the affirmative. Steps should be taken to have another meeting that, with the full information before it, should consider the situation."

Accordingly, at a meeting of the Patriotic Fund Committee on Thursday night, the 1st of February, Mr T. W. Kempthorne presiding, the question was again brought up, the Chairman proposing

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a motion in favour of a fourth Contingent. The proposal was advocated by Messrs Hosking, G. L. Denniston, J. F. M. Fraser, and W. A. Shields; and the matter seemed to be clinched by telegrams from the Mayors of Invercargill, Gore, and Oamaru, promising cordial co-operation—promises that have been amply fulfilled. The result was that a motion in favour of the Fourth Contingent was carried with unanimity; and as this was the meeting from which the movement formally started, it may be interesting to mention that it was attended by the following gentlemen :—Messrs T. W. Kempthorne (chairman), G. L. Denniston, C. R. Smith, J. Hutchison, J. A. Park, J. F. M. Fraser, W. A. Shields, J. H. Chapman, F. Stronach, R. Smith, W. A. Wathen, J. H. Hosking, R. Glendining, C. R. Ritchie, J. Reid, G. Fenwick, J. Hazlett, W. Davidson, Dr Coughtrey, Dr Gordon Macdonald, and the Rev. A. Chodowski.

From what has been written, it will be seen that the Premier first made the suggestion in very definite terms, and that it was taken up by the gentlemen already named, and then, without much loss of time, adopted by the Patriotic Fund Committee. The progress of this most noteworthy public movement thenceforward has been in every way remarkable. It has not been by "leaps and bounds," but rather with the steadily accelerating speed and ever-increasing force of a torrent that has been fed by innumerable contributions from every town, village, hamlet, and farm. Columns upon columns of printed matter have appeared in this journal from day to day, telling the public of the progress that has been made, of the help volunteered and rendered, and of the widespread practical sympathy which has shown that the people are prepared to do something more than shout "Rule, Britannia!" and sing "God save the Queen."

The matter was relegated to the old mass meeting committees, strengthened by the addition of Messrs Hazlett, Speight, Shields, and Kempthorne; and the management was entrusted to the executive known as the Organising Committee. No time was lost, as will be seen from the fact that Messrs Shields, Hosking, and Speight, on Sunday, the 4th of February, sent 160 telegrams to country districts asking for co-operation. Had these telegrams not been "franked" by the authority of the Government, the sending of this batch alone would have involved the expenditure of £65; and the case was one in which time meant more than money, for delay would have invited failure.

The next day, the first business of the week, the local "War Office" was opened in the Garrison Hall buildings, and from that time onward has been the vital centre of the movement, where

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business has been carried on with the utmost possible expedition, facilitated by the most modern and efficient means, including the employment of expert shorthand-writers and typists. How much has been done may be inferred from the fact that close upon 42,000 articles of "kit" have been numbered. The minute-books alone would represent years of work to many public bodies. These books contained over 250 typewritten pages, and over 2000 separate matters have been dealt with. All this mass of executive work has been attended to by the members of the Organising Committee—Messrs Kempthorne (chairman), Fraser, Shields, Hosking, Millar, Park, Glendining, Speight, J. Mills, and Hazlett. These gentlemen have met from day to day, frequently sitting for the greater part of the day, and often far into the night; and it is probably a "record" in connexion with committees, having a multitude of things to attend to, that there has not been in their proceedings a division upon any single matter. There have been discussions innumerable, and differences of opinion; but, after the questions have been thought out and talked out, unanimity has been arrived at, the conclusions being adopted without division or dissent.

The medical examination of the men has been carried out in the most scientific and vigorous manner, chiefly by Drs de Lautour, Fulton, Coughtrey, and Burt, who were assisted to some extent by Drs Will and Stephenson. Messrs Taggart, Hazlett, Gow, J. Duthie, Turnbull, and Brydone gave their services in connexion with the purchase of horses; and the numerous important matters of detail that make so largely for the comfort and efficiency of soldiers were especially attended to by Surgeon-major Coughtrey, who devoted himself to the discharge of his duty with zeal and pertinacity that can dispense with praise, but merit remembrance.

Soon after starting, the Committee secured the services of Mr E. F. Duthie as honorary secretary, and have since had the advantage of his experience and ability in that office. As is well known, funds have continued to flow in from all directions; and the recording, acknowledgment, and custody of these outward and visible signs of the grace of patriotism must have involved much work and no little responsibility. From sums covering hundreds of pounds sterling to a few pence, the tribute of little children, money has come in, and been duly acknowledged and credited in the records. The Committee have accepted the proffered services of Messrs Wm. Brown and Co. and Messrs Barr, Leary, and Co., professional accountants, in connexion with their balance sheet, which will be published in due course.

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The nobility of response to the call to arms for Queen and Empire is known to, and appreciated by, the whole community. Committees in Oamaru, Gore, and Invercargill attended to the applicants in their respective districts; but that did not prevent young men travelling from remote parts to the Central Organising Committee and making their intentions known here, while from every part of Otago committees sent word of offers of men and promises of material assistance, often covering their complete equipment. At first three classes of applicants—A, B, and C—were invited; that was to say, men fully equipped, men with suitable horses or £25 for their purchase, and men who, though unable to offer the price of equipment or horse, were anxious to do their best for the honour of our colony and the weal of the British Empire. The War Office was deluged with applications and was besieged by applicants—young, strong, and determined. Within a few days it was apparent that applicants in the C list had not the ghost of a chance. Altogether 250 applied in that list before it was closed, 120 offered themselves and their horses, and 75 came forward fully equipped. These figures include the men sent by other selection committees, but not the applications received at other centres; so that probably from 700 to 800 men offered for service in the Otago and Southland Rough Riders before the announcement was made that no more could be entertained.

Having regard to the response in men and means from all parts, and to the whole of the circumstances connected with the genesis of the Fourth Contingent, the Executive Committee may well say, as they have said in the introduction of the valuable souvenir, "Our Boys," which they have issued officially: "The present outburst of patriotism in the colonies and dependencies of Great Britain must have come as a thunderclap to the 'Little Englanders' who have so long preached and believed that colonies are like fruit, and ripen only to fall off the parent tree. It has almost been a surprise to ourselves to find a whisper of danger to our Motherland stirring us to our inmost depths, quickening our heart-beat, and loosening our purse-strings."

FORBURY CAMP.

On February the 13th the first batch of recruits reported themselves at Forbury Park. Captain Stronach, who took command from the outset, was everywhere straightening things up. Veterinary-captain Snowball was as busy as he could be with horses, which kept coming in every few minutes. Sergeant-major Knee enrolled the

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men and read over the camp orders to them. And thus the camp training of the Otago and Southland Contingent began.

On the 14th twenty remounts were railed to Christchurch for shipment to South Africa.

The matter of testing the men's fitness and selecting the best was one of the heaviest tasks; and now that it is all over, it must be said, in justice to the officers of the Otago Hussars, who superintended the riding, that they acted throughout with the strictest impartiality and conscientiousness.

On the 17th the Contingent was strengthened by the arrival of the Southlanders; and this enabled mounted drill to be carried out by a company of 60 or 70 men.

On the 26th Captain Harvey reported himself in camp, and immediately took his share in the task of giving the men mounted instruction. The work was right into his hands, for during the past 18 months he had been engaged in licking into shape the Clutha Mounted Rifles, who, in that time, have risen from a squad of raw recruits into a smart corps of mounted infantry.

At the end of February the first of the Northern men arrived. Sergeant Jickell (now sergeant-major of No. 10 Company) and seven troopers from Nelson came down by steamer and went into Forbury Camp.

On the 5th of March the Contingent was finally selected; and 100 men, with six in reserve, were chosen to constitute the Otago contingent. The surplus men nearly all went into the Reserve Corps; and the business of allotting horses and serving out equipment was at once proceeded with. It was at this stage that the question of the appointment of officers excited discussion; and, as our readers know, it was eventually settled by the Defence Office appointing Captain H. V. Fulton to the command of the Otago company, and Captain Harvey to a company composed of men from Southland, Westland, Nelson, Marlborough and Napier.

On the 12th inst. Colonel Webb took over the camp on behalf of the Government. Otherwise things went on as before, with the same officers in charge. The camp was then enlarged to take in the Northern men. The first batch of the Aucklanders arrived a day or two afterwards, bringing 40 North Island horses. Two days later Captain Walker (Waikato Mounted Rifles) brought down 20 men and 160 horses in the Hawea; and on the 17th the whole Contingent was made complete by the arrival of Lieutenant-colonel Collins with 257 men and 125 horses. The camp was now the largest Contingent camp yet held in the colony.

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In conclusion, a very sincere tribute must be paid to the Volunteer officers who patiently and persistently went about their work daily, neglecting their own private concerns, and were all animated with the one desire—to cram as much practical instruction into the men as the comparatively short time would permit. Captain Crosby Morris, Lieutenant G. W. Macdonald, and Lieutenant Freeman are all first-class instructors; and if, as the result of their efforts, the men bear themselves as well-drilled troops, and display any special ingenuity in doing all the damage possible to the enemy while keeping their own skins whole, these officers will be pleased. Lieutenant Prain, who did not live in the camp, but came out whenever possible, also did good and useful work; and Captain and Quartermaster McIndoe deserves praise for the time and trouble put in at the camp. Captain and Adjutant Stronach, who was seldom out of his uniform while the camp lasted, has superintended everything in a manner worthy of all praise. Captain Price was his right-hand man, and he must know the colour, brands, and pedigree of every horse in the Otago troop. The question of keeping a register of all the gift horses, numbering and branding them, and finally allotting them to the right men was cheerfully undertaken by him; and in addition to this, the looking after the remounts and sick horses was a big item. Veterinary-captain Snowball has also, from the outset, given all the assistance in his power; and a word of credit is due to Staff-sergeant Knee, to whom the Contingent owe most of their knowledge in guard duty and manual exercises. Lastly to the Rev. W. Curzon-Siggers, who conducted several open-air services at the camp, besides holding a special farewell service at St. Matthew's Church (where hymns, composed by him for the occasion, were rendered), special praise must be given; nor must we omit to mention Mr A. R. Falconer to whom the men are greatly indebted for the many hours he spent at the camp in attending to their welfare.

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THE LATE LIEUT.-COL. FRANCIS V D.

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WITH THE . . .

Fourth New Zealand Rough Riders

In SOUTH AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.

"Come on, tumble out, you fellows! 'Fall in' has sounded." Thus addressed, the nine occupants of one of the numerous tents helping to shelter nearly five hundred aspirants for fame as soldiers of the Queen grumblingly donned their clothes in the uncertain light of early morning, and paraded for the daily roll-call. As only one hundred men were required to make up the local quota of the Fourth Contingent, every man in camp was anxious to appear at his best in the riding and shooting tests he must necessarily pass. As all these men had undergone a severe medical examination before being admitted into camp, it was foreseen that the men selected would be worthy to uphold the honourable record that the preceding contingents had established in far-away South Africa.

At first glance the men on parade looked an indiscriminate crowd—in fact, anything but soldiers. There were those among them who had roughed it in the back-blocks since childhood, mustering sheep and cattle; others that had spent the greater part of their lives prospecting, with varying success, in the ranges, and knowing what it was to go hungry; and many, again, who had held good positions in

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the city and had never known what it was to sleep out of a feather bed or to miss their regular meals. All these were eager to get to the seat of war—as troopers or in any other capacity, so long as they got there. The majority of those on parade were dressed in civilian clothes; but, dotted here and there, the well-known Volunteer uniforms could be picked out, among them being those of the Highlanders, the Hussars, and the Navals.

The acting-sergeant-major, quite alive to the importance of his position, proceeded to call the roll, those present answering in some cases for tent-mates who, for some unaccountable reason, had not returned from the previous night's visit to town, and who were probably awaiting a favourable opportunity to circumvent the watchful sentry and rejoin their comrades before their absence was detected.

"Adams?"—"Present!" "Brown, J.?"—"Here!" "Brown, W.?"—"Here, sir!" "Don't 'sir' me; I'm not an officer. Martin, William?"—No answer. "Well, William Martin?"—"Present!" "What *is* your name, William Martin or Martin William?"—A pause. "Martin William. No! I mean William Martin." "Damn it! Here's a man that doesn't know his own name!"

The roll having been called, the orders for the day were read by the orderly sergeant, who then warned squads for the riding and shooting tests, the remainder of the men to act as fatigue parties to clean up the camp. After ordering those who had been told off for the riding test to parade in ten minutes with horses saddled, the sergeant-major dismissed the parade.

The men who had done a great amount of riding, and who had a good opinion of their abilities as horsemen, hailed with delight the chance that the test afforded them of showing their prowess. But they had not the same idea of their capabilities when the judges had finished with them. On the other hand, many that were more proficient

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as cyclists than as horse-riders, had been looking forward with some trepidation to this hour; and numerous were the anxious inquiries addressed to men that had successfully passed their riding test: "I say, mate, you might lay me on to a quiet prad"; or, "Where is the horse you rode yesterday, Jim?" Another would have saddled a likely-looking beast, when someone would call out: "Say, mate, if you want to get through your test, don't take that one; he's the worst pig I ever rode." Then off would come that saddle as if the horse were the very devil himself; and the would-be rider, thanking his lucky stars that he had been informed of this one's failings in time, would secure the next likely-looking horse, praying it would be one to carry him through successfully.

When all were mounted, a start was made for the ground where the judges were waiting. Each man in turn was called out and ordered to trot his horse round a triangular piece of turf, in the centre of which the judges took up their stand, noting how each man handled his mount. As this was but a preliminary test, the majority of the men had no difficulty in satisfying the judges. The riders were then ordered to gallop singly over a stretch of ground for about five hundred yards, and to pull up when called upon to do so. This test caused no little amusement to the interested spectators who, even at that early hour, had turned out to see the fun. The first man to start had some difficulty in getting his horse to leave its mates, and it was only after repeated applications of whip and spurs that he managed to get it into a half-hearted canter. But this performance by no means suited the judges, who ordered the man to put his horse to the gallop, but in vain. The rider at last, having been urged to further efforts, lost his temper, and made the suggestion that the judges should "have a try" themselves.

The next dozen riders got through their performance satisfactorily. Then a slight diversion was caused through one of the horses bolting with its rider for a mile or more,

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and, after clearing a post-and-rail fence, coming to grief in attempting to negotiate a dry ditch. No harm was done either to the horse or to the rider, and, the latter having remounted, they returned to the starting-place. Later on in the day it was told in the tents that this rider had planned the bolt in order to make a good impression on the judges; but he had not calculated on the ditch.

The remainder of the men passed the test in a more or less satisfactory manner; and an adjournment was made to a paddock, where a hurdle 3ft in height was erected for the third section of the riding test. To the men who were accustomed to riding across all kinds of country, and who never troubled to open gates where a short cut could be taken over hedges, post-and-rails, or even bare wire, this test was mere child's play; but to the less experienced this obstacle, when faced under the merciless eyes of the judges, assumed the proportions of a stone wall. The first two horsemen took the hurdle in good style; but the third, dressed in the uniform of a local Volunteer company, in trying to emulate the good example set him, took a firm grip of his saddle, jammed his feet well home in the irons, closed his eyes as he neared the obstacle, and trusted to luck to pull him through. Alas! his guiding star had left him in this his hour of trial; and when he regained his senses, he found that he had parted company with his four-footed friend, which was gazing down at him from the opposite side of the hurdle, with a half-sorrowful, half-contemptuous expression in its eyes.

The next few riders, after several attempts, failed to negotiate the barrier, and gave way to a fine, strapping young fellow attired in the dress of a mounted Volunteer, and riding a likely-looking black. On receiving the word to go, this rider took a firmer grip with his knees and a shorter hold of his horse's head, and raced at the hurdle; but when within a few paces of it the horse stumbled and, crashing into it, was almost down; but the rider made a

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splendid recovery, amidst the applause of the spectators, and returned to the starting-point for a second attempt. This time the horse made no mistake, and cleared the hurdle with fully 2ft to spare.

In marked contrast to this rider, the next to face the music came forward in a bluejacket's uniform. Judging by his appearance, he had hardly recovered from the previous test; and, with feet nearly through the stirrup-irons, with pants that had worked up to his knees, and mounted on a pig-headed nag, he looked anything but a "Rough Rider." After making two or three ineffectual attempts to clear the hurdle, he was ordered to make way for the next rider.

When at last the test was finished, the men rode back to camp, where they were greeted with such questions as, "How did you get on, Charlie?" "Oh, no good! Will get bumped to-night." Another was heard to remark that he had met his "Majuba." Others, again, observed that they couldn't go wrong, and that the test was "dead easy." All, however, looked forward with no little concern to the judges' announcement of the result of the test.

The rest of the day was filled in with mounted parades, fatigues, and shooting tests, under the direction of local Volunteer officers, after which all hands were paraded. The roll having been called, the sergeant-major ordered all those answering to the names on the slip of paper just handed to him by the orderly officer to take a step to the rear. Then, after telling off a quarter guard and a horse picquet, he dismissed the remainder. Those whose names had been called were then informed that they had failed in the tests held that morning, and were requested to leave camp as soon as possible, their services being no longer required.

Some of those rejected had, no doubt, given up good positions on the off chance of getting away; and others had travelled hundreds of miles, only to be thrown out to make way for better men. However, all could not get away; and, realising this, the men returned to their tents, and, collecting

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their belongings, bade a sorrowful good-bye to their more fortunate tent-mates, and, shouldering their blankets, passed silently out of the camp. These scenes were of daily occurrence, until there remained in camp only those finally selected; and these were quickly licked into shape, so that they soon settled down to the ordinary routine of a soldier's camp life.

The men now looked eagerly forward to the day of their departure, for which great preparations had been made by the general public, who were determined to give their representatives a fitting send-off.

As everything must come to an end some time or other, so did the camp of the Fourth Contingent—on March 24, 1900. All was astir at the camp early on that morning, for much had to be done before the Rough Riders of the Fourth started on their triumphant march through the city that was about to take affectionate leave of them—and perhaps farewell, for in all probability not a few whose hands were wrung in token of deep affection by father or brother, and whose lips were kissed by mother, sister, or sweetheart, would return no more to beloved New Zealand.

At 9.30 a.m. the bugler sounded the "Fall in," and in a minute every man was in his place on parade. The boys were in great spirits, any sadness of parting being viewed, as yet, from a distance; and as they looked round the old camp for the last time, any rough affection for the place where they had enlisted as soldiers of the Queen, and learned their drill, was swamped in pleasurable anticipation of the great day which, for them, was but beginning.

The Contingent, accompanied by some two thousand Volunteers and eighteen bands, moved off from Forbury Park amid the cheers of the crowds congregated to see them depart. The whole line of march from the Park to the Oval, where the Governor, the Premier, and other leading men waited to address the men and wish them God-speed, was one dense mass of people, assembled to do honour to

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the Fourth Contingent of Rough Riders of New Zealand. Cheers ran along the lines of spectators in one continued shouting; and as the troops entered the Oval, they were greeted with frenzied enthusiasm by forty thousand people. When the various speeches were finished, and the benediction had been pronounced by Bishop Nevill, the last part of the march was begun. Entering the main street, the crowds, who were shouting themselves hoarse, increased until they formed a dense moving mass. People would break into the ranks excitedly, bidding their particular friends good-bye. Here and there a trooper would leave the ranks, hurriedly grasp a man by the hand, kiss a woman friend, and then hastily rejoin his section. Hitherto the joy of getting away to the war and the excitement of the morning had kept the men from thinking of the parting wrench. But now, when they looked into their friends' faces and shook hands for the last time, the feeling of sadness was felt. Yet a number of amusing incidents that occurred on the way served to lighten the hearts of everyone.

On arrival at the wharf, where the Contingent embarked for Port Chalmers, to tranship to the troopship lying there, the scene presented was one not easily described. All around the wharves an excited, eager pack of people strove to obtain a glimpse of the departing soldiers. There were many touching incidents, many tender farewells were exchanged, as the men embarked; but the same careless, happy-go-lucky spirit still characterised the bearing of the majority of the men. Once on board the Moura, however, things quietened down; and shortly after, the vessel, escorted by six or seven others, steamed slowly down the harbour to Port Chalmers.

On nearing the Port, those on board could see thousands of people streaming down to the wharves to greet the Contingent. The steamers were not long in disembarking their living freight, and the troops were lined up on the wharf for the final procession. Preceded by the Volunteers and

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a detachment from H.M.S. Pylades, the men marched through the main street, which was gaily decorated with flags and arches, to the Recreation Ground, where they halted in front of the pavilion to hear the farewell speeches.

Little did the assembled thousands think, when listening to the Governor's final speech that day, wherein he expressed the hope that before long another Victoria Cross might be pinned on the breast of a New Zealander, that his hopes would be fulfilled. It is a matter of history now how Sergeant Hardham, one of the Fourth Contingent then addressed by his Excellency, secured the coveted honour, and how at least one other of the same regiment was recommended for that distinction.

The function at the Recreation Ground being over, the troops were marched to the local hall and entertained at afternoon tea by the residents. From the hall to the wharf the Contingent vainly tried to march in order. They were rushed by excited friends, and hugged and kissed by weeping women-folk. Yet, in spite of it all, a number maintained their careless, good-humoured exterior, enjoying what fun they could, and shaking hands with everyone and kissing every woman that came in their way.

At length the wharf was reached, and by half-past 4 all the men had embarked on the troopship that was to be their home for a month or more. The final scene at Port Chalmers was striking in the extreme. When the last good-bye had been spoken, and the big steamer had cast off, the men on board lined up in rows along the sides of the boat. Slowly the vessel moved forward, and a great shout went up. The great moment had come, and the Fourth Contingent were leaving their native land behind them. As the steamer slowly glided towards the Heads, the familiar song "Auld Lang Syne," sung by the crowds on shore, became fainter and fainter, and was at last drowned in the

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cheers accorded the troops by the bluejackets manning the yards of H.M.S. Pylades, then lying at anchor in the stream.

Night had fallen when the troopship at last cleared the Heads; and the knots of men gathered about the deck discussing the events of the day gradually dispersed to their assigned quarters as the ship rose and fell on the waves, producing that peculiar sensation which a great number on board had never before experienced.

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CHAPTER II.

Life on Board the Troopship.

The first day, Sunday, on board the troopship broke beautifully fine with a calm sea. Nevertheless, a number of the men were prevented by seasickness from appearing on deck to catch the final glimpse of New Zealand. The last point of land was watched by those assembled troopers until it became a mere blur on the horizon; and, as the vessel steamed steadily on her way, it gradually disappeared altogether from sight. What thoughts were passing through the minds of the men as they took that last fond look at the land of thei rbirth, where they were leaving all they held dear to face unknown dangers in helping to uphold the honour of the old flag they had been taught, since childhood, to love and respect! How many of them would be spared to return to the little island colony, time alone would tell.

After being at sea a few days, the men came to the conclusion that life on board the troopship was not to be compared with the life they had led when camped at Forbury Park. So great a hold had the patriotic feeling on the general public at the time the men were in camp that the latter were looked upon almost in the light of heroes, and treated accordingly. They had received invitations to attend theatres, races, and smoke concerts; private citizens had arranged garden parties and dinners in their honour; and lady friends had kept them supplied with fruit and eatables of every description. In addition, there had been the making of new friends, the excitement occasioned by the various tests, and an occasional run into town; and all these were capped, finally, by the magnificent send-off. How easy it

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was to be a soldier when marching through crowded streets to the accompaniment of martial and inspiring airs, amid the deafening cheers of assembled thousands! But, when cooped up in the limited space afforded aboard a troopship carrying men and horses, and ordered about at every turn by officers, the men soon realised that they had embarked on no pleasure trip.

There was very little variety in the life on board a troopship. *Reveille* at 5.30 a.m.; stables from 6 o'clock till 7; breakfast from 8 till 9; and shooting practice and lessons in scouting, for those not on fatigue or other duties, till 11 o'clock. Half-an-hour later the horses were fed and watered; and dinner was announced at 1 o'clock. The afternon was taken up with drilling and manual exercises; and, at 5 o'clock, all hands fell in for stables. This daily routine was broken at intervals by an inspection of kits and saddlery, or by a full-dress parade. In the evenings two of the officers took turn about in lecturing to the men on scouting and other duties; but, as these were only voluntary lectures, the majority of the men preferred to lie about on deck, or in the boats, smoking and yarning till "Lights out" was sounded by the bugler.

On April 3 we arrived at Albany, the Westralian coaling port, and all the men were allowed to go ashore for a few hours to stretch their legs; and this they did with a vengeance. Numbers were soon careering about the streets on hired bicycles; others, after satisfying their large appetite, strolled round viewing the principal sights. After taking six hundred tons of coal aboard, the steamer got under weigh at 10.15 a.m. on the 4th, after a twenty-four hours' stay. The Marlo, from Melbourne, with a full complement of passengers had dropped anchor close to the Monowai. As we forged past the former steamer, those lining its bulwarks gave us hearty cheers, which were as willingly returned, as were also the encouraging "salvos" that the crowd on the Persic, lying outside, sent across the waters while we

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showed the huge liner the way to steer for Table Bay. Clear of the Heads, the sea was found to be in a tranquil mood; and, with a light leading wind, the troopship sped rapidly away from the island continent.

On Thursday afternoon about 3 o'clock we were abreast of Cape Leeuwin light. On the same day the barque, General Fairchild, of San Francisco, bound east, was sighted; and, the following day, another square-rigged vessel was seen, although it did not come within hailing distance.

Beautiful weather being experienced, life aboard went on serenely, the monotony of the usual round of stables, guards, parades, and fatigues, being broken by concerts held in the saloon after tea; and several incidents that occurred helped to make the life of the trooper more than pleasant. There was one such incident a day or two out from Albany. The orderly sergeant, being anxious to be up in good time to warn the orderly officer, had turned in together with the officer at 8 p.m. The former slept soundly till he heard the bugle. It was still dark when he hurried on deck and called the officer, who dressed in haste and made his way to the quarter-deck, where he found two subs. sitting in their pyjamas enjoying a smoke. Thinking they had been making a night of it, he besought them to take heed unto the error of their ways; and an exchange of compliments passed before they discovered that he had turned out, as he thought, for *reveille*, and that the bugle call that had wakened the sergeant was "Lights out."

The fare provided by the Union Company was excellent. Porridge and meat for breakfast; roast meat and plum-duff, or stewed fruit and rice, for dinner; and, for tea, bread, butter, cheese, jam, and biscuits.

On Good Friday we experienced the first spell of rough weather since leaving New Zealand. The wind being dead ahead, the seas kept continually breaking over us, and greatly retarded our progress. We could steam at half-speed only, so that the horses might not be knocked about.

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The latter were very much exhausted after two days pitching; and we lost three of them on Good Friday, one on Saturday, and another on Easter Sunday, bringing our total losses up to twelve. To see the poor brutes hoisted aloft, and then dropped overboard, was anything but pleasant; and we were thankful when the weather cleared and the mortality ceased. The weather then kept fine for some time, and we made such good headway that the captain assured us that we would reach Durban on Saturday, April 21; and, from early morn on that day, a sharp look-out for land was kept. It was soon discovered, and by 11 o'clock we steamed into the roadstead, in which lay a regular fleet of transports and other large steamers. The green hills surrounding Durban, and the life that the presence of so many steamers imparted to the scene, did not fail to give us a good impression of South Africa.

Major Francis, our commanding officer, went ashore as soon as possible for orders, and returned about 4 o'clock with the tidings that the contingent was to land at East London and proceed at once to Bloemfontein. The anchor was weighed, the bridge spoke to the engine-room, the bells rang, and in a few minutes we were swinging round, when suddenly the flags on the signal station went up, spelling, "Don't leave. Wait for orders." The anchor, accordingly, was once again dropped over the side; and the men went down to "stables" wondering what would be the next move.

It was a beautiful, starlight night as we lay at anchor in the Durban roadstead. The day had been very warm, but it was agreeably cool in the evening, with the water as smooth as glass. Close to the Monowai lay the magnificent liner, Briton, of 10,000 tons; on the other side were the Romford and the Duncarn, and then, further on, was the Cephalima with three hundred Boer prisoners on board. The transport Pavonia, which had arrived that morning, bringing the Suffolk Engineers, the prison ship, a Cunarder, the Custodian, and transport No. 97 were all close at hand.

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The lights of the huge vessels as they twinkled in the night, and the murmurings of voices wafted across the waters from the decks, together with the shore lights in the distance, made a pleasant, peaceful scene; and it was hard, then, to believe that it was grim war that had drawn so much shipping to the place. Besides the ships mentioned there were lying at the quays inside the harbour, a large number of vessels, including the hospital ship, Simla, and Lord Scott's beautiful yacht, one of the Royal Yacht squadron.

On Sunday morning the order came that Beira was to be the destination of our troopship; and we sailed for that port on Monday, April 23.

After an uneventful, though rough, passage of three days from Durban, we hove in sight of Beira on the morning of Thursday, April 26, and, steaming slowly up the estuary, we finally dropped anchor about half a-mile from the town, just thirty-three days after leaving New Zealand.

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CHAPTER III.

Beira—End of Voyage.

Beira, as viewed from the decks of the Monowai, was extremely picturesque. Built right on the beach, it seemed to be composed mainly of long, low, corrugated iron buildings with wide verandahs, intermingled with large, airy structures roofed with red tiles and surrounded by handsome balconies, which suggested the close proximity of the town to the Tropics. Moving about here and there in the scorching sun could be seen figures, dressed in white and wearing large helmets, taking advantage of the shelter afforded by the numerous palms and other trees growing along the whole length of the principal thoroughfares.

During the afternoon various officials, including the English Consul and a doctor, came off and interviewed the commanding officer and the captain of the vessel. Each was rowed across in his own private boat, pulled by eight or twelve powerful natives attired in snowy white uniforms. These boats were models of comfort and elegance. In the stern, sheltered from the fierce rays of the sun by canopies made of rich fabric, and reclining on costly cushions, were the owners of the boats. While the officials were engaged with the officers down below, the men bartered with the native boatmen for the bead and worked copper wire ornaments with which they were adorned, and these changed hands at prices highly satisfactory to the sellers.

The memory of that evening passed at anchor off the little Portuguese settlement is indelibly impressed on my memory. The sun had set with a pageantry of splendour, and the black pall of night had quickly descended, enveloping

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everything in its folds. The monotonous throb-throb of the engines, experienced without cessation for a month past, was hushed. There was a strange stillness in the air—a stillness broken now and again by strains of music from a band on board the huge German liner Kaiser Wilhelm, lying some two hundred yards away. This boat, with its electric lights shining forth from its innumerable portholes, and reflected on the placid surface of the sea, had the appearance of a floating palace, this effect being enhanced by the darkness of the night. From the shore the weird chanting of the natives was borne at short intervals across the water, mingled with the hoarse croaking of thousands of frogs. As the evening wore on, even these sounds were stilled; and when "Lights out" had been sounded by the bugler, I coiled myself up in my snug retreat in one of the boats, and, undisturbed by the coughing and stamping of the horses or the lapping of the water against the ship's side, as the tide slowly ebbed, slept as only a soldier can sleep.

On going ashore the following morning Major Francis was informed that we could not at once begin disembarking the horses, owing to the insufficiency of the lighters used for the purpose. This news was received by the men with anything but good grace, for, after being cooped up on the troopship for such a length of time, we had all been looking forward to getting ashore at once.

On May 1 the first batch of horses were sent ashore in charge of half-a-dozen men; and the following day a squad of forty men landed to act as guard over a thousand Hungarian ponies which, having been purchased by the British Government, had been landed the previous day. By Friday the rest of the horses were sent safely away from the ship; and on Sunday, May 6, the remaining officers and men took a final farewell of the Monowai. As we gradually drew away from the ship one felt a pang of regret at leaving the one link that bound us to New Zealand. In a few days she would be steering her way to our distant home, while we, landed in a strange country, were facing unknown dangers.

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En route to the camp, which was situated some two miles from the town, we saw much that both amused and interested us. "Niggers," wearing only a lion-cloth and a smile, gazed open-mouthed at us as we passed, and scrambled for scraps of bread and biscuits thrown to them. These Kaffirs appeared to be doing all the work—some carrying lengths of timber, others swarming about in the yard of a large iron-mill stacking iron, jabbering and chattering all the time like a lot of monkeys. Then, to crown all, a trolley, which was pushed from behind by three natives, and on which were seated tailorwise, dressed in spotless white, with large helmets, two stout Chinamen, passed by amid the jeers of the troopers.

On arriving at our destination we at once proceeded to pitch camp in one of the large paddocks that had been vacated by the Australian Bushmen on their departure, a few days previously, to render assistance at Mafeking. These paddocks, of which there were seven, were enclosed with barbed wire fences 12ft high. The ground inside the fence had the appearance of a stubble field. The long, rank jungle grass, similar to that growing outside, had evidently been eaten off short, leaving innumerable crab-holes exposed to view. It was firm enough under foot; but, on a stick being inserted in one of the holes, we discovered that there was a thick black slime underneath. Later on we learned that the camping-ground was one huge swamp during the wet season, infested with crabs and the other animal and insect life naturally found in marshy country. The surrounding country was very low-lying, without a hill of any description in sight; and being covered with jungle, it afforded first-rate opportunities for hunting, there being in the vicinity any amount of water-buck and many different kinds of tropical birds, not to mention such great game as lions. Some six months previous to our arrival in Beira a lioness had carried off a calf; and a few days later a native boy, who had been playing not fifty yards

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from the railway station, suffered the same fate. Snakes, also, were plentiful, and during dinner we killed three green ones close to the tents.

During the first few days on shore all hands were kept busily engaged cleaning up camp, attending to the horses, and stacking forage, the latter having to be carried on the backs of the troopers for some distance. On Wednesday morning permission was granted to twenty of us to visit the town, with orders to behave ourselves and to return within two hours. Accordingly, shortly after stables, we donned our full-dress uniforms and proceeded along the railway-line leading into Beira, arriving there at midday. After partaking of a none too substantial breakfast, consisting of five different courses, for which we were each charged 5s, we started on a tour of inspection. We found that the majority of the buildings in the town were of galvanised iron; but we noticed some substantial stone structures, the most pretentious being that of the Bank of Africa. Many tropical trees, including banana palms, were growing along the full length of the principal thoroughfares, and afforded a splendid shelter from the burning sun. The main street boasted a pavement composed of flag-stones, and on either side was what appeared to be the roadway, but which consisted of nothing but red sand. Two lines of rail, eighteen inches wide, traversed the road; and along them "niggers," mostly Kaffirs, pushed clumsy chairs of various descriptions, most of them being somewhat similar to the go-cart used in New Zealand. These belonged to the well-to-do classes, who paid heavy rates for the use of the street and the lines. The shopkeepers also ran small trollies, or trucks, to convey their goods to the hotels, to the wharf, or to private customers. This was really the only mode of conveyance in vogue, the climate being too hot to admit of horses being used. The presence of numerous hotels (every third building was an hotel) did not suggest to us by any means that we had landed in a prohibition town. Portuguese policemen, dressed in white uniforms, with helmets to match, were

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stationed at intervals along the streets. Not one of these men was much over five feet in height, but as they all carried revolvers which, from all accounts, they were not slow to use, any deficiency in height was amply made up for. Foreigners of every nationality were met with during our promenade through the streets. Indian coolies, wearing the familiar red Turkish caps, Danes, Portuguese, and Frenchmen were to be seen, while a party of seven German sailors caused us some amusement. These latter had deserted from a large sailing vessel lying in the stream, and each of them was carrying a bulky, badly-rolled umbrella, and a red spotted handkerchief which doubtessly contained the owner's worldly goods. Every now and again trolley chairs, in which were seated portly Portuguese merchants irreproachably dressed and wearing numerous jewelled rings, rattled by. We found clothing and fruit excedingly dear. Oranges were a shilling a dozen, and bananas sixpence; and we were even more surprised on being charged eighteenpence per drink, when we adjourned to an hotel to quench our thirst. A little after our allotted two hours were past, we returned to camp, doffed our uniforms, and resumed fatigue duties.

During a subsequent visit paid to the town at night (needless to say we had taken "French leave"), we found it to be a much livelier place than on the occasion of our previous visit. All the hotels, or bars as they were called—the principal ones being the "American" and the "New" bars,—were brilliantly lighted up, while bands, composed of foreign musicians, discoursed music for the benefit of thirsty customers. The large business places and shops were closed, but the smaller shops in the more secluded portion of the town were open. These, for the most part, were owned by foreigners whose evil appearance was not enhanced by the miserable light afforded by the flickering oil lamps suspended from the roofs. After completing a tour of the town an adjournment was made to the "American" bar, upon entering which an extremely lively scene presented itself to our astonished gaze. A mixed number of Australian and

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New Zealand troopers, who like ourselves had broken camp, had taken possession of the larger part of the huge bar, and were holding an impromptu concert, every man being called upon to contribute an item, failing which he was compelled to treat all hands to drinks. As a drink cost eighteenpence, it can be guessed that even the most bashful endeavoured to amuse the company when his turn came, the result in some cases causing roars of laughter and endless amusement. Some sang rollicking songs, the whole company joining in the choruses, beating time with their spur-heeled boots, and thereby adding not a little to the general effect. A few recited, while others again were content to tell funny yarns. In one corner of the bar three Mexican cowboys, who had brought a mob of unbroken ponies from America for the British Government, and who were attired in characteristic cow-boy rig-out, with the large sombrero, and with heavily-rowelled spurs, were arguing with four Colonials, and, judging by the remarks dropped now and again, were becoming very heated. In another corner three Colonials were lying sound asleep regardless of the noise made by their companions. Over all presided the proprietor and his assistants, dressed in spotless white, and kept busy replenishing empty glasses. Mirrors ranged round the walls reflected the score of lights placed in different parts of the room, putting the finishing touch to what was, to us at least, a unique spectacle. It was close on midnight when our fun was stopped by the arrival of an armed guard from camp; and, although we were arrested, for such a night's experience, we were quite willing to undergo the punishment imposed.

When leaving the Monowai, we understood that a few days, or a week at the outside, would see us well on our way to the base camp, but in this we were disappointed. A week passed, two weeks, and still no signs of our getting away. By that time the unhealthy nature of our camping ground had manifested itself. Fully a third of the men were down with malarial fever and dysentery. The flies, attracted no doubt by the horses, appeared in swarms; and

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mosquitos, too, became numerous. Added to this the water was bad, being unfit for drinking unless boiled for some considerable time. Altogether we were having a very rough time; and when, on the evening of May 18, three weeks after our arrival, it was announced in orders that we would entrain the following morning for Marandellas, there was general rejoicing at the prospect of leaving a place that is so aptly described by Bent—

"Beira is a Portuguese word for a spit of sand, and is a horror of corrugated iron domiciles on a bare, shadeless sandspit at the mouth of the Pungwee. Where the eye does not rest on sea or sand it wanders from Beira over miles of flat, mangrove swamps. The heat is scorching; when you walk you sink ankle-deep in red sand at each step. Of all places Beira is most horrible."

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CHAPTER IV.

On the Road to Marandellas and Fort Charter.

At 9 a.m. on the 19th the train that was to take us from the coast drew up alongside our camp. Half of the regiment were told off to load the tents, kits, and forage, the remainder attending to the entraining of the horses. There had been a considerable amount of competition, in the matter of trucking horses, in the different regiments that had preceded us from Biera. Before our turn came, the record was held by the Westralians, who had trucked one hundred horses in fifty-nine minutes. The Southland Section of our Contingent succeeded in beating this by no less than twenty-five minutes, trucking one hundred in thirty-four minutes. When it is taken into consideration that twenty-five trucks were required to accommodate this number of horses, it will be recognised as a splendid performance.

The first stage of our journey was to a place called Bamboo Creek, situated sixty-five miles from Beira. In an ordinary train in New Zealand this distance would have meant a run of about three hours, but on the two-foot gauge, where the rails were anything but evenly laid, and the diminutive engines were dependent on wood for fuel, it was considered a long journey. Leaving Beira about an hour after mid-day we did not reach our destination till nearly midnight.

The country we passed through consisted of open, rolling downs stretching as far as the eye could reach, and covered with long coarse grass, with clumps of trees here and there, and dotted plentifully with anthills, some of which rose to a height of fifteen or twenty feet. A few small, verdure-clad kopjes were passed, and these looked cool and inviting to

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the troopers crowded together, as they were, in small open trucks, completely at the mercy of a tropical sun. At intervals along the line stacks of wood were piled from which the stock of fuel on the engine was replenished from time to time. As these engines burnt up the fuel very quickly, stoppages for taking on wood were very frequent. Every few miles we passed small corrugated iron buildings, or stations, built on piles some three or four feet off the ground, and boasting unpronounceable Portuguese names. Each station was surrounded by a few acres of maize, and banana palms; and these were the nearest approach to civilisation that we saw on our journey.

There appeared to be no recognised time-table on this line, the engine-drivers running the trains apparently to suit themselves. One noteworthy incident occurred at one of the larger stations. As the train ran alongside the platform, we were beseiged by a crowd of coolies, carrying on wooden trays eatables of every description; and these were offered to us at almost prohibitive prices. For a pound tin of Peak, Frean's biscuits they demanded seven-and-sixpence, for a small bottle of lime juice five shillings, for tinned sausages five shillings a tin, and for jam half-a-crown per tin. In their eagerness to effect a sale before the train moved off, the coolies handed their wares into the trucks, as asked, and waited for the purchase money to be handed over to them. In some cases this was forthcoming; but as a rule the troopers, on receiving the goods, distributed them throughout the trucks, and they then offered what they considered a fair price. The owners refused to lower their prices, and were promptly told to go to Hong-kong or to some more distant place. Finding they could get no satisfaction from the troopers, the coolies appealed to our officers. One of the latter that had served in India and spoke the language fluently, asked if any of the inmates of the trucks had stuff belonging to the "niggers," and was answered with a chorus of "No, sir." Just then the train began to move out of the station; and the Asiatics, seeing the last chance

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of receiving payment for their wares gradually slipping away, set up loud lamentations and offered to accept anything at all. To cap everything the officer in question, in a spirit of mischief, jumped into the centre of a group of chattering, excited coolies, tripped up one of their number, and, collaring his tray of eatables, emptied the contents among the troopers of a passing truck, and then, waving adieu to the discomfited coolies, swung himself into his carriage as it came abreast of him. An old adage says that stolen fruits are sweetest. I cannot vouch for this; but I can thoroughly recommend as a good thing during the heat of a South African afternoon a feed of Peak, Frean's biscuits and Cadbury's chocolate washed down with stolen lime-juice cordial.

As daylight gave way to darkness that evening, a thick heavy mist, peculiar to that part of South Africa, and doubtless due to the low-lying, swampy nature of the surrounding country, fell and enveloped everything. Passing objects assumed fantastic shapes, while a grass fire burning in the distance had the appearance of a huge conflagration close at hand. As night drew on, the chilliness of the asmosphere made itself felt in direct contrast to the heat experienced during the day. Great-coats were donned, and, huddling still closer together for greater warmth, we slept till our destination was reached, undisturbed by the jolting and bumping to which we were subjected on that apology for a railway.

Having arrived at our camping place for the night, the horses were detrained and picqueted; the tents were erected in the dark, and shortly after midnight all hands were sleeping their first sleep in the new camp. We found Bamboo Creek to be very similar to Beira, but with one exception. In the latter camp we really had not tasted a decent drop of water during our three weeks' stay. In Bamboo Creek, however, splendid water was to be obtained from a running stream situated half a-mile from the camp. In this creek a pool, four or five feet deep and nicely

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sheltered from the sun by several large trees, afforded a splendid swimming bath for the men, who, when not on duty, availed themselves of this luxury at all times of the day. The flies and mosquitos were quite as troublesome as they had been at Beira; but, fortunately, crabs were conspicuous only by their absence.

Two companies of Imperial Yeomanry that were camped close to us had some twenty of their men in hospital at the time of our arrival; and we learned that seven of their number had died of dysentery, or from fever, the previous week. One of their corporals, who had been accidentally shot, was also lying in a precarious condition. It appeared that, while his company were camped at Twenty-three Mile Creek, the corporal had occasion, one dark night, to procure water from a creek close to the camp. An officer pacing up and down outside his tent, hearing a strange noise in the creek, attributed it to the presence of some wild beast. Slipping quietly into the tent he secured a loaded carbine, and, without challenging, fired in the direction from which the sound came. His shot was answered by a piercing shriek, which must have turned his blood cold. Seizing a lantern, and accompanied by two brother officers, he hurried down to the creek, and there found the unfortunate corporal with a bullet hole clean through him.

On the 22nd we had our first experience of a tropical downpour. The rain came down literally in sheets, and before long the camp had assumed the appearance of a miniature lake. The tents afforded shelter for a time, but as the showers increased in violence, the water gradually found its way underneath them; and the men were standing in several inches of water with their blankets and other belongings awash round their feet, while at the same time they were subjected to a shower-bath from above. All took it good humouredly, however, and managed to get some enjoyment out of it. One man in a distant tent could be heard calling for a lifebelt, another regretted he had left his bathing trunks at home, while a third, on observing

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that it was coming down pretty hard, was sarcastically asked how the devil he expected it to go up. After lasting for about half an hour the shower passed, leaving the camp in a miserable plight. The fires on which the mid-day dinner had been cooking were out, the saddles, which half an hour previously had been neatly arranged in long, straight lines, were now lying half submerged in muddy water, and the appearance of the rifles standing in small stacks outside the tents showed that they would take a great amount of cleaning before being fit to undergo an official inspection. The damage done in camp was trifling compared with that done to the food supplies in the adjoining paddock. There, huge piles of supplies, consisting of flour, sugar, coffee, tea, biscuits, oats, and hay, had been stacked. Each stack had been covered over with a tarpaulin which afforded protection from the rain; but, being built on the bare ground, the water soon found its way in underneath with the result that the bottom tier of every stack was covered with water, thus ruining hundreds of pounds' worth of supplies. However, when the sun shone out again, blankets, saddles, and clothing were quickly dried, and by nightfall things were made fairly comfortable in camp.

Owing to the insufficiency of rolling stock, we were sent forward in small detachments from Bamboo Creek. The first to get away left on the 24th in charge of the horses. As the broad gauge railway began there, it was expected that better accommodation would be provided for the men and horses than had been the case on the narrow gauge line from Beira. This was not so. Though the trucks were certainly larger and roomier, there was such a limited supply of them that the journey to Marandellas proved anything but a pleasant one. The vans or trucks were not unlike the meat-vans in use on the colonial railways, and into them fifteen horses were crowded; and, as there was little or no ventilation, one can readily imagine the state of the horses when Umtali, the first stopping place, was reached.

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Each detachment had lively experiences on the road. When about twenty miles from Bamboo Creek, and just about half the distance; but, reaching a stiff grade, they engines ran out of water. All hands turned out of the trucks, and, attaching drag-ropes to the engine, hauled her about half the distance, but, reaching a stiff grade, they remained for twelve hours till a train, coming down the line, drew them on to the tank, where steam was got up again and the journey resumed.

At 11 o'clock on the morning of May 26, the last detachment, with Captain Fulton in charge, left Bamboo Creek. Thirty-eight of us, many still suffering from the effects of dysentery and fever, were packed into an enclosed truck having accommodation for not more than twenty. Our particular engine, the "Jack Tar," did not prove to be as reliable as its name might suggest, as, owing to an escape of steam, frequent halts had to be made. These stoppages, together with those made to take on wood and water, retarded our progress to such an extent that it was nearly midnight before we reached Mandegas, a small Portuguese township fifty-six miles from our starting place. After an ineffectual attempt had been made, with rags and waste, to prevent the escape of steam, it was decided to camp for the night. This decision gave us great satisfaction, blankets were soon spread on the permanent way, and, after partaking of hot coffee and biscuits, all turned in, and despite the hardness of the couches, slept till daylight.

We made a fresh start at 6 o'clock next morning, our old friend the "Jack Tar" being replaced by a more up-to-date engine that had arrived during the night. There was a delightful change in the scenery shortly after we left Mandegas. The flat, monotonous, swampy wastes, to which we had become accustomed since landing at Beira, gave place to more hilly country. Long, low lines of kopjes, interspersed with well-wooded gullies, stretched away for miles. At every turn, as the train toiled up a steep pinch through narrow cuttings or zig-zagged in and out at the foot of

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picturesque kopjes, a fresh phase of the country presented itself to view. Wild game seemed plentiful. Flocks of plover and partridges, startled by our approach, would take wing and fly for about a hundred yards and then alight and seek the shelter afforded by the long grass. Waterbuck were numerous, and now and again secretary birds stalking about in pairs were observed. The sun, whose fierce rays were tempered by the crisp morning breeze, shone down from a cloudless sky making, on the whole, a pretty scene, and causing a trooper to remark that South Africa promised to turn out to be a better place than he had expected. Yet to us, being New Zealanders, there appeared to be something wanting to complete the picture. In every valley we looked in vain for the little white farmhouses, with the smoke curling upwards from their old-fashioned chimneys; and on every ridge one half expected to see sheep feeding. The well-cultivated fields that we were accustomed to see surrounded by their neatly-trimmed hedges were not met with. As mile after mile was traversed, the stillness, unbroken by the bleating of sheep or the lowing of cattle became almost oppressive. Not a human being was visible anywhere. True we caught occasional glimpses of half-naked Kaffirs peeping at us from behind the shelter of a belt of trees, which doubtlessly hid their kraals from view, but these added to, rather than detracted from, the uncivilsed appearance of the country. To those of us that had never before been away from New Zealand, it seemed almost incredible that such vast tracts of land were uninhabited save by uncivilised natives and by wild animals.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, when within about seven miles of Umtali, we crossed the boundary line dividing British and Portuguese territory. This boundary was marked only by a heap of stones and a deserted mud hut. Shortly afterwards we entered Umtali, a town thoroughly English in appearance. Situated at an altitude of over three thousand feet about sea-level, on the slope of a hill

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overlooking the veldt, it is a fine, clean, and well-laid out township in which there are, besides a good hospital, many private residences.

As we were to stop at Umtali over night, we shouldered our kits, and leaving the station, marched out to the British South African Police camp, where arrangements had been made for our accommodation. Before retiring for the night, Captain Fulton requested all hands to parade at half-past 6 the following morning to attend the funeral of a young Victorian Bushman, named Swan, who had died that day from fever. Accordingly, at the appointed time, we paraded, and marched to the hospital where the body lay. Six of our number, acting as pall-bearers, covered the coffin with a Union Jack, and we proceeded to the cemetery, the two nurses that had attended the Victorian during his illness weeping bitterly as the cortege moved off. Picture a gun-carriage containing a coffin, draped with a Union Jack, drawn by a dozen small bullocks driven by Kaffirs, headed by a party of twenty police in their full-dress uniform of navy blue tunics, light riding pants, blue putties, and regulation slouch hats, and on either side of the carriage three New Zealanders, the rear being brought up by fifty of the Fourth marching in single file with arms reversed. A more impressive scene could hardly be pictured than when, just as the sun was slowly rising and casting a golden radiance over everything, the procession moved along over a rough road to a small cemetery situated under the brow of a kopje. The burial service was read by an elderly Army chaplain, after which the body was lowered into the grave; three rounds of blank were fired; the bugler sounded the "Last Post"; and another colonial was added to the list of those already lying buried in South Africa. Leaving the cemetery we marched slowly back to camp our thoughts occupied with the scene we had just witnessed.

At noon on the same day our party started on the last stage of the journey to Marandellas, and after an uneventful and uncomfortable ride arrived at 6 o'clock on the morning of May 29.

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On reaching camp we were informed that the horses which had preceded us had stampeded the previous day. It appeared that, owing to there being an insufficient number of men to look after the horses when turned out to graze, the officer in charge decided to keep them in the stables until the arrival of more men. The major in command of the camp, learning that the horses had been kept in for several days, ordered them to be turned out at once, saying there was no fear of their stampeding if four mounted men were sent out to keep them together. Our officer was forced to obey orders; and accordingly the horses were released. For some time they showed no signs of breaking away; but when they became tired of feeding they began to wander, and before long, despite the efforts of the guards, stampeded in all directions, small clouds of dust miles out on the veldt alone indicating the direction they had taken. All the available mounts in camp were requisitioned, and the runaways, with the exception of eight, were rounded up after a day's hard riding. The majority of the horses were in a bad way, however, some having been staked when galloping through the scrub, others being badly foundered—nine of them dying during the night. This was, indeed, a great set-back to the regiment after the extreme care that had been taken of the horses since leaving New Zealand. About a dozen of our men were so disgusted at losing their mounts that they joined an artillery corps just then forming at Marandellas.

Our camp was pitched on rising ground overlooking the veldt where the Matabeles made their last stand against the British in 1896. The surrounding country seemed beautiful to us; but we were warned that it was a most unhealthy place. We learned further that, if our horses were permitted to eat the grass while the dew was still on it, they were liable to contract horse-disease, or blue-tongue, a disease proving fatal in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. The water looked fresh and good, yet it could not be drunk with safety as fever was very rife in the district. The food

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issued by the commissariat department was decidedly better while we were in camp at Marandellas. Fresh meat was supplied in place of bully-beef, bread replaced biscuits, and a quarter of a pound of jam was issued daily to each man, though the latter luxury was increased by the supplies secured by the men that were doing guard over the food supplies at the railway station. In addition, two Jews opened a store in the camp; and there groceries of all descriptions could be purchased, but at exorbitant prices. When this store was first opened, the proprietors had their goods temptingly arranged in the limited space afforded them. Rolls of bacon and hams were suspended from the rafters; tins of biscuits, bags of flour, and oatmeal, were stacked just inside the door, while the shelves held tinned fruits and fish, and other delicacies. But, finding their stores were disappearing faster than they were selling them, the Jews wisely decided to keep all eatables on their own side of the counter. It was no uncommon sight to see a trooper dodging into camp with a cheese, a roll of bacon, or a tin of biscuits.

While camped at Marandellas our time was fully occupied with guard duties, picquets, fatigues, and dismounted drills. A few days after our arrival, the regiment paraded on foot in full marching order before General Carrington and his staff, the general expressing himself as being well pleased with the soldierly appearance of the men.

Owing, probably, to the high altitude at which we were camped, the temperature was much lower than that we had experienced either at Beira or at Bamboo Creek. Consequently, the flies and mosquitos were not so numerous, but scorpions and centipedes were plentiful. On June 1 cork helmets were issued to the regiment; and the carbines we had taken from New Zealand were replaced by Lee-Enfield rifles. A few days later word was received in camp that Private M'Intosh, of B Squadron, had died from dysentery that day at Umtali. A subscription was at once raised among

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the officers and men for the purpose of erecting a headstone over his grave; and a substantial sum of money was collected.

At mid-day on June 7, after having been inspected by General Carrington and Colonel Grey, the regiment left Marandellas on its long trek of two hundred and ninety miles to Bulawayo. Owing to the heavy, sandy nature of the roads, our progress was naturally very slow. The order of march was the same every day. *Reveille* at 2 o'clock in the morning, move-off at 3, and halt at 6. Then, during the greater part of the day, the men rested, resuming the march at half-past 3, and halting for the night at 7 o'clock. In this way fifteen miles a day were averaged. Tents were wholly dispensed with, the regiment sleeping on the ground. As the days were very warm, the nights cold, and the dews very heavy, bivouacking in the open was rather disagreeable for the first few days; but, after that, the men soon settled down to the life of trekking across the veldt.

Before leaving Marandellas the principal veterinary officer inspected our horses, and ordered that forty-six of them were to be left behind being unfit for travelling, thirty-five men and two officers remaining to look after them.

Arriving at Fort Charter two days after leaving Marandellas the commanding officer received a telegram ordering him to leave, in an isolated camp, all the Hungarian remounts (about fifty or sixty in number) then with the regiment, as glanders had broken out at Beira among the mob from which the remounts had been taken. Lieutenant Bauchop was told off, with twenty-five men, to take charge, the remainder of the dismounted men being ordered to ride on the waggons.

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CHAPTER V.

From Fort Charter with the Remounts.

[As the writer remained at Charter with Lieutenant Bauchop's party, we shall give an account of their experiences from that place instead of recounting the doings of the main body, as the road traversed by the former was practically the same as the route followed by the latter.]

After bidding good-bye to our comrades our small party left the main body, and proceeding for about three miles selected a camping place on the banks of a splendid stream. We then built a kraal into which the suspected ponies were put until the arrival of the veterinary surgeon. Having plenty of spare time on our hands during our three weeks' stay in this place, we had the opportunity of indulging in a little deer hunting, deer being plentiful in the near vicinity of our camp.

Tents were struck at 10 o'clock in the morning of July 4, and with the kits, forage, and rations, were loaded on the two waggons; and the journey to the Capital city was resumed. Lieutenant Bauchop informed us that, after consulting with Coulson, the Dutch conductor in charge of the bullock waggons, he had decided to adopt the following programme during the trek. We were to leave camp daily between 5 and 6 o'clock in the evening, march till midnight, and then bivouac for the night. *Reveille* at 7 in the morning and feed the horses, stables from 9 till half-past, graze horses till 2 o'clock, and then stables at 4. But the waggons were to leave camp at 3 o'clock every afternoon, trek till 9 o'clock, outspan until 3 o'clock next morning, and move off again till the men caught up shortly after daylight.

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We reached our first camping ground, the Range, at 2 o'clock the same afternoon. Seen from a distance, and judging by the number of buildings scattered about, the Range had the appearance of a large township, but, on closer inspection, was found to consist of twenty-eight newly-built native huts erected for the accommodation of a regiment of Imperial Yeomanry that were expected in a few days. The latter were to act as a garrison while the Range was being used as a Supply Depot by the British Government, several large corrugated iron buildings in which rations and forage were stored, having been built for the purpose. Our party took possession of four of the vacant huts, and, wood and water being plentful, soon made ourselves comfortable. We moved off again at 5 o'clock the following evening, and halted at midnight. Being unable to find water near the bivouac, we concluded that we had missed it in the darkness, and turned, supperless, into our blankets.

On June 6 we turned out at daylight, and commenced a search for water, but were not successful in finding any. Three of the boys then saddled up their horses, and, taking all the water-bottles with them, rode back on the tracks of the previous evening. After going about three miles they came across the bullock waggons outspanned by the roadside. On asking Carlson where the spruit, to which he had directed us on the previous day, was to be found, he pointed to a spot about a hundred yards from the waggons where he said they would get water. Reaching the place indicated the men found a small hole half full of muddy water, with which they filled the bottles. We had always understood that a spruit meant a clear, running stream of water. Small wonder then that we had passed the water in the darkness of the night.

Camp was broken up again at 6 o'clock the following morning; and we passed through Enkeldorn, a small township containing two churches, two beer saloons, a billiard-room, several small stores, a hospital, and a large corrugated

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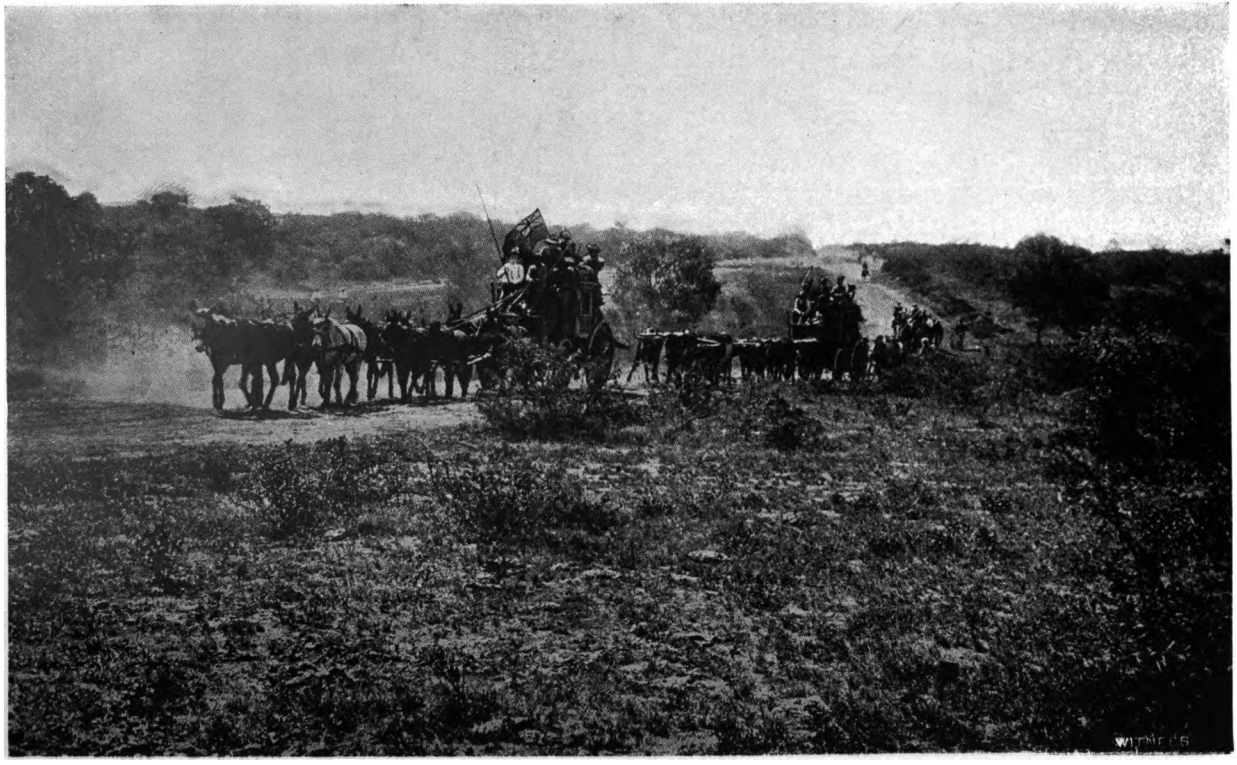

ON THE ROAD FROM MARANDELLAS TO BULAWAYO.

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iron building owned by Julius Weil, a well-known Dutch merchant. Our bivouac for the night was made in a belt of trees three miles out from the township; but as there was no spruit, we were obliged to use the water from our water-bottles for making tea.

Next morning we made a start at daylight, and, after a trek of four miles, camped for the day at a mule station. During this trek we saw thirteen wild ostriches stalking quietly along about a mile from the main road. Three of the men rode out, and, getting within a few hundred yards, fired a few rounds at them without any apparent effect other than making them increase their speed from a walk to a long trot, which soon took them out of sight. In the afternoon the waggons, which had stopped at Enkeldorn to take on forage and rations, caught us up. Three of our men that had been left in hospital when the main body had passed through three weeks previously joined us here. Then, leaving the mule station at half-past 5, we arrived at Sebaque shortly after midnight; and having boiled our canteens we turned into our blankets.

On July 8 we were out at 7; and, after bathing in the Sebaque River, which constitutes the boundary between Mashonaland and Matabeleland, and which we found to be very cold, we visited the township. There were but a few buildings here, including one or two native huts and a store and hotel combined, all nicely whitewashed, each with its own small garden. At the store we purchased brown bread at a shilling per loaf, and some tinned fish. General Carrington and staff passed through Sebaque in mule coaches on their way to Bulawayo.

In the course of a conversation with two members of the B.S.A.P. we were told an amusing incident concerning some officers that had been in Sebaque with the Australian Bushmen two days previously. It appeared that two of them had left camp with the intention of securing some game. When about three miles off they

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noticed a movement in the long grass in the distance, and seeing two black objects coming into view, fired, causing the latter to disappear from sight. They were proceeding to the spot, when two more horns, as they thought, were seen some distance to the left. Again they fired, and these also disappeared. On going forward, conjuring up visions of the juicy steaks they would have for dinner, the two sports were horrified to find they had shot two mules belonging to the mail coach. After having deliberated as to what was to be done, they decided to return to camp as quickly as possible, and to say nothing about their adventure. However, the Kaffir in charge of the mules, who had been too frightened to show himself at the time, arrived in camp before the officers and reported the occurrence, the result being that the latter were arrested on their return and forced to pay the full value (about £30) for each mule. Another sporting officer, who had gone in an opposite direction, had managed to knock over an ostrich, and returned carrying a large bunch of ostrich feathers. Being rather of a talkative nature his account of the capture soon spread about, until, ultimately, the police heard of it. The latter, knowing there were no wild ostriches within eight or nine miles of Sebaque, made inquiries, with the result that they were forced to demand compensation from the officer for having shot a tame bird belonging to a Dutch farmer. Taken altogether the stay of the three officers in Sebaque must have proved rather costly to them.

Moving from Sebaque at 6 o'clock we trekked for eight miles, and halted for an hour, having passed five bullock waggons on the way to Marandellas from Bulawayo. [It may be of interest to note that the conductor and owner of these waggons was Rorke, who made a great name for himself while attached, as a scout, to the British forces in the Matabele Rebellion of 1896, and who was recommended for the V.C.]

Next morning we were out at 8 o'clock, and managed to find some water of a milky colour about half a-mile from

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our bivouac. One of the troopers that was cooking breakfast left the fire burning, and on his return a few minutes later found that the grass round about had caught fire, and as a consequence that Lieut. Bauchop's blankets, overcoat, and oilsheet, which were spread out on the grass, had been burnt to cinders. It was at the camp in this place that a Basuto driver of one of the waggons had caused some amusement by getting drunk on Kaffir beer. After treating us to a war-dance, and cutting all manner of capers, he refused duty, and coiled himself up in his blankets.

That same night we arrived in Gwelo, an important Rhodesian mining township. By way of change we had Quaker Oats for breakfast the following morning; and after having helped Coulson to shoe some bullocks, we visited the town. Gwelo was a nicely-situated place, well laid out, and very prosperous looking. The roads and footpaths were broad and well kept. The principal buildings were four substantial hotels, a gentlemen's club, several large shops and refreshment rooms, and numerous public buildings. Many pretty villas surrounded by gardens and well-trimmed hedges were scattered about, and seemed cool and inviting to us accustomed as we had become to the great, lone, dusty veldt.

On July 12, after purchasing groceries and necessaries, we left Gwelo; and after a two days' trek of about twenty-nine miles, we reached Boshlaagate.

On the morning of July 14 we found that the waggons had not arrived, the bullocks having knocked up and been outspanned three miles back. After breakfast we paid a visit to the store, where we were shown a splendid collection of deer horns. The walls of the largest room were covered with horns of almost every kind of this animal known to South Africa, and ranging from the large spiral horns of the "koodoo" to the more insignificant ones of the "springbok," and of the "hartebeeste."

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Allowing the bullock waggons two hours' start, we caught up to them at half-past nine, and then pushed on to Shangani River, camping there for the night. We found on our arrival that the Sixth New South Wales Imperial Bushmen were also in bivouac there.

The Sabbath, like the majority of the preceeding days, broke splendidly clear. We were awakened at daylight by the hoarse cawing of many crows, which were perched in the branches of the two large trees under which we bivouacked. After indulging in a dip in the river, our party strolled over to the Bushmen's camp, arriving in time to see them make a start on the day's trek.

Our next bivouac was at a mule station called Rongive; and there we visited a monument erected to the memory of a number of people that were massacred during the Matabele Rebellion of 1896. That night Lieut. Bauchop told us that Coulson had offered to take our party, on the following day, out to the farm of a friend of his, named Eric Staples. The latter knew of the existence of some ancient ruins (supposed to be the remains of part of King Solomon's Mines); and the conductor thought he could be prevailed upon to guide our party to them.

So next morning all was astir in camp at daylight; horses were groomed and fed, and the twenty of us who had expressed our willingness to visit the ruins, moved out at a little before 8 o'clock. Anticipating a day's hard riding we rode light, and carried only enough "scoff" for one meal. The day was beautiful, and numbers of wattle trees in full-bloom filled the air with their perfume. Leaving the main road we struck across the bush veldt, travelling in a south-easterly direction. After riding over nine miles of rough country we arrived, at 11 o'clock, at the farm of Eric Staples. The latter's astonishment on perceiving twenty khaki-clad figures riding up to his humble stoep was great indeed, but on Coulson's going forward and stating the object of our visit, the young farmer was hospitality

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itself. He informed us that, as he had only visited the ruins twice during his long residence in the locality and then when guided by a native, he was not certain whether he could locate them; but he expressed his willingness to give us every assistance he possibly could.

Riding off from the farm shortly after 11 o'clock, and travelling still south-east, we rode on till 3 in the afternoon without seeing anything in the nature of ruins. Just as we were thinking of retracting our steps, we caught sight of a number of Kaffir huts—so we thought—situated about two miles away to our left. On making a closer inspection by the aid of field-glasses, however, we came to the conclusion that these were the ruins for which we were searching. The intenvening space was quickly covered; and we were soon roaming about among the ruins of some ancient city. These covered some three acres of ground, and were surrounded by what had been at one time a massive, circular stone wall. This had been fully twelve feet in height, and had been built of stones laid one upon the other without cement of any description. Large trees grew in profusion within the wall, and smaller vegetation covered the wall itself in places. Once inside the outer wall one was struck by the mysterious stillness reigning everywhere; and in that gloomy place, deserted save by native bears and mere-cats, it seemed that one was treading on sacred ground, so weird and uncanny a feeling was produced; and it reminded one of an old cemetery vault, or of the description, so often read, of Cities of the Dead. On entering, by means of a small hole, what had once been one of many temples, we found the remains of a white marble floor. This marble had a striking pattern prettily traced in blue; and pieces of it were secured by members of our party. In the centre of this floor there appeared to be—in the dim light afforded by matches—a cavity or well incased in a kind of cement. But owing to the limited time at our disposal, all efforts to break the covering proved futile, and we were forced to abandon the attempt without having satisfied our curiosity.

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Before leaving the ruins, Staples informed us that ours was the third party only, to his knowledge, that had visited the ruins. The first was a party raised by a company to prospect for relics or for anything of value that might be found. But, after a sojourn of three weeks, they were forced, owing to an outbreak of fever and from various other causes, to abandon the search, and they returned to Bulawayo with several gold amulets and a number of gold coins that had been unearthed from around the outer ruins. The second was a picnic party of tourists that had spent a few hours in the vicinity.

Leaving the ruins a little after 4 o'clock we started on our ride back to camp. Having to pass over fully twenty miles of rough country, covered with prickly shrub and innumerable bear-holes, and intersected by several small creeks and swamps, we were obliged to forces our horses to a good gallop in order to get as far on the way as possible before darkness set in. Spills were numerous, but as none of them were of a serious nature, we reached camp safely shortly after 7 o'clock. Then after an hour's spell, all hands saddled up, and the trek to Bulawayo was resumed; and a few hours later we camped for the night at a mule station. Being thoroughly tired out with our exertions during the day we were in no hurry to turn out of our blankets the following morning; but having at last to get up, we found that our only chance of cooking a meal depended on our keeping the fire going with buffalo-chips, as there was no available firewood.

That night we trekked thirteen miles; and after spending the following day in camp, we pushed on again, being anxious to reach our destination as soon as possible. At 11 o'clock the same night (July 19), after our long trek of two hundred and forty miles from Fort Charter, we arrived at the Huzzar camp in Bulawayo, and being fairly exhausted we lost no time in turning in.

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MARKET SQUARE, BULAWAYO.

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Next morning we were not long in showing ourselves, only to learn that the main body of our regiment had been ordered on to Fort Tuli, and had left Bulawayo some days previously. Our keen disappointment may be well imagined. We had calculated on rejoining the regiment at Bulawayo, but now they seemed further off than ever. However, there was some consolation in the fact that, as yet, our comrades had seen no fighting, and by the time they did we would doubtlessly be with them to lend a hand.

When we had disposed of a good breakfast, several of our number saddled up and proceeded into town. On emerging on to the highway from the belt of green bush surrounding the camp, we caught our first glimpse of Bulawayo. The morning was beautifully fine. On either side of the broad roadway leading to the town pretty villas nestled, their broad stoeps covered with clustering, creeping plants, and surrounded by the usual South African shrubs and flowers, whose perfume, carried on the fresh morning breeze, had a most exhilarating effect. The town itself lay some two miles away, and with the rays of the sun reflected from the roofs of its several large buildings and from the church spires, formed a fitting background. Riding through the town one could not help noticing the red, rusty appearance of the whole place. Some of the principal buildings, including the Post Office, the Public Library, hotels, stores, and the Public Offices, were built of red brick. The market square and surrounding streets were of a sandy nature, and the red dust raised from these by several cumbersome bullock waggons added to the general rusty effect. The most pretentious structures were the Grand Hotel, the Telegraph Office—a fine stone building boasting the latest appointments,—and the Gentlemen's Club. The presence of numerous corrugated-iron shops and shanties gave the town a somewhat unfinished appearance.

Our first call was made at the Post Office. Here we were overjoyed to find that two bags of mails had arrived

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the day before for our regiment. Only those that have lived among strangers in a strange country, far removed from the family circle, and that have been deprived of home news for a considerable period, can understand how eagerly we had been looking forward to receiving our first mail in South Africa. The contents of the bags were eagerly scanned in search of letters addressed in familiar hand-writing; and we hurried back to camp to peruse, in the seclusion of our tents, our respective missives. The hair-cut, shave, and dinner we had promised ourselves on entering the town were all forgotten in the excitement of having received letters from home.

During a second visit to the Post Office, the writer was approached by an officer serving on General Carrington's staff, and offered a position as orderly to take charge of his two horses during the trip to Fort Tuli. He informed me that General Carrington and staff were to leave for the latter place on the 22nd, and, as an inducement for me to accompany him, said that I would be able to keep the Hungarian remount that I had ridden through from Marandellas. Seeing a chance of rejoining my regiment at so early a date, I accepted his offer and transferred my kit to the B.S.A.P. barracks, where the officer was quartered. These barracks are situated about a quarter of a mile out of town, and are composed of corrugated iron buildings, all nicely whitewashed and surrounded by wide verandahs. Well-kept walks, bordered on either side by flower-beds, gave them a clean and tidy appearance. Connected with the barracks were spacious stables, a wet and a dry canteen, and a very decent concert hall. The police themselves were a first-rate crowd. The majority of them were well-connected at Home, and had left the Old Country to seek a fortune in the place where gold and diamonds play such an important part; but owing to force of circumstances they had drifted into the police.

Preparations for our departure to Tuli had been completed on the 23rd, when word was received from head-

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THE FOURTH ROUGH RIDERS CAMP. BULAWAYO.

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quarters ordering all troops then at Tuli, and those on the road then to return at once, and proceed to Mafeking without delay. This news upset all my calculations, and I was thinking of returning to the Huzzar camp and awaiting the return of the Fourth from Tuli, when the officer with whom I was acting as orderly suggested that I should accompany him to Mafeking and rejoin my regiment there. Being anxious to see the latter town, I was nothing loth, and decided to go on with him.

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CHAPTER VI.

With the Main Body.

[As the road traversed by the remounts from Marandellas to Bulawayo was virtually the same as that followed by the main body, we need not again describe the journey, but shall proceed to give Lieut. J. R. MacDonald's account (already published in the *Otago Daily Times*) of their trip from Bulawayo to Fort Tuli and back again.]

"Back at Bulawayo again, after spending more than a month marching over three hundred miles for nothing. Summed up, our performances so far, amount to this: We have been more than three months in Africa, we have travelled three hundred miles by rail from Beira to Marandellas, marched three hundred miles by road from Marandellas to Bulawayo, and three hundred miles from Bulawayo to Tuli and back, and we have never seen a shot fired in anger. I think we have put up a record. Our next stage is from Bulawayo to Mafeking, where, if we have any luck, we may get some fighting to do; but hope deferred maketh the heart sick.

"It is a slow business travelling with bullock waggons. We usually trekked ten or twelve miles each morning; *reveille* at 3 a.m., advance at 4 a.m. One exception to this routine had to be made to cross a waterless stretch of thirty miles between Pourri Pourri and Reitfontein. Don't imagine that these places are townships; they are mere geographical expressions. There isn't a hut or a human being at either of them. We got no sleep before we started. The horses were watered and fed at 8.30 p.m., 'boot and saddle' rang cheerily out at 10 p.m., and 'advance' at 11 p.m. We reached Oliphant's Pit (commonly called Elephants' Pits)

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at 6 a.m. The water here was only a few gallons in a deep pool in the midst of some large rocks, and was not available for the horses. We fed the horses, breakfasted, and started again at 8 a.m., reaching Reitfontein at 10 a.m., after having been eleven hours on the road. Here we found a little water in a shallow pool dug out of the sand in a small spruit, and it took us an hour and a-half to water our horses. (Definition: A spruit is a watercourse in which you are led to expect water, but rarely find any.)

"The black boys that are employed as leaders and drivers for our bullock teams are arrayed in the most extraordinary collection of ragged garments imaginable, ranging from a castaway evening dress coat to an old sack with holes cut for the head and arms, and from blankets of the most gaudy colours to the skins of wild beasts—an assortment that would make a christy minstrel troop turn white with envy.

"The stray natives that we meet along the road have been well trained. As we approach they remove their dilapidated hats, as if we were a funeral, and as we pass they utter the significant word 'Baas.'

"Manzimnyama is halfway between Bulawayo and Tuli. It consists of a store and a police station—merely this and nothing more,—but the Gwanda Gold Mining Company is opening up its property about a mile off the road. At Manzimnyama the coach ends its journey south, and the native runner takes up the mails. The coach is the type familiar to all New Zealanders, but here the name of Zeederberg and Co. replaces that of the well-known Cobb and Co. Drawn by ten mules, it requires two men on the box seat to manage the team. The inner man handles the reins, while the outer one wields with great skill a whip of extraordinary length. The coach stops at the store, the few mails are thrown out, and then, with knobkerri in hand, blanket on back, and mail bags on his head, the native runner takes the road to Tuli. Occasionally a special runner

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glides noiselessly into our camp, carrying a letter in a cleft stick. Moving with cat-like tread among the groups of men, he finds his way, as if by instinct, to 'the big baas,' and delivers the important missive.

"Our camp at Tuli was on the left bank of the Shanshi River—the river a wide expanse of yellow sand through which winds a silver streak. Across the river, on an irregular, flat-topped kopje, stood the fort, looking picturesque against the setting sun, its twenty or thirty buildings resembling the mosques and minarets of some Oriental town. Some officers rode over to welcome us, and invited us to dine with them next day. At mid-day we rode over; but, alas, as we approached the fort, the illusion of the previous evening was dispelled, and the mosques and minarets of our fancy resolved themselves into dilapidated circular mud huts with conical, thatched roofs. The population of Tuli consists of half a dozen officers of assorted regiments, thirty-five rank and file, a doctor, a native commissioner, a native tax collector, three Boer prisoners, and the usual motley crowd of blackboys. During the summer Tuli is a hotbed of yellow fever, and the doctor tells me that even now only ten out of the 35 rank and file are medically fit for duty. Some outsider had told us that Tuli meant hell! However appropriate this designation may be, the native commissioner says that Tuli means dust. But there was nothing dusty about the dinner at Tuli. 'They did us well,' these hospitable dwellers in the wilderness. We sat down about a dozen strong. At each end of the table was a large dish of game, chiefly partridge. The carver's task was easy. It consisted in quickly transferring a whole bird to each diner's plate, and each man was speedily carving for himself. Our hosts apologised for the absence of vegetables, and abused Alphonso and Hooligan (two blackboys) for forgetting to boil the rice; but what more did we want? Partridge and mealie bread and butter (tinned, but still butter).

"We have done very well for 'scoff' on the return trip to Bulawayo, as we got some cattle at Tuli, which we are

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SQUADRON OF FOURTH ROUGH RIDERS ON THE ROAD FROM BULAWAYO TO FORT TULI.

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driving with us, killing one when fresh meat is needed. We have also had camp-ovens on this trip, and the cooks are no longer reduced to the necessity of baking their bread in an ant-hill, as they had to do on the march from Marandellas to Bulawayo.

"On the four hundred and fifty miles of road between Marandellas and Tuli the only milestones are the graves of the English dead. Every now and then, close to the road-side, we passed a memorial stone and a little group of graves surrounded by a rude fence of wire. The dates are all 1896. Here it is a woman and three children murdered by the Mashonas, there a husband and wife and five children murdered by the Matabele; here it is a major and lieutenant and a dozen privates killed in action, and there the stone bears the names of 42 settlers who were butchered. One is forcibly reminded by these mute witnesses of Kipling's lines:—

> On the sand drift, on the veldt side, in the fern scrub we lay,
> That our sons might follow after by the bones on the way;
> Follow after—we are waiting by the trails that we lost,
> For the sounds of many footsteps, for the tread of a host.

"This country is large, huge, enormous, and (as Mark Twain would say) that is all there is to it. A few gold mines are yielding fair returns in different parts, a good many more are being opened up, and hundreds of others have been taken up with a view to flotation on the English market; but throughout this vast territory there are no horses, no cattle, and no sheep; no farms, no fences, and no settlers. Rinderpest and the Matabele Rebellion of four years ago have done their work only too well. And the hand of the Chartered Company lies heavy upon the land. Take one example—in every gold-mining company that is floated, the Chartered Company is entitled to one-half of the vendors' shares. Rode over to the Gwanda gold-mining property one afternoon. The manager entertained us most hospitably, and his housekeeper invited us to stay to dinner. We stayed—she was the first white woman we had spoken

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to for four months. The machinery for the mine is not yet on the ground, but 450 blackboys are employed in opening up the property. We saw the old workings, where centuries ago the ancients had won gold, to be used, perhaps, in the construction of King Solomon's temple.

"Insect life is abundant, and of the most extraordinary variety, taking its hue and shape from its environment. As you are having your 'scoff' look at that little clod of dark brown earth between your feet. It is alive. Nonsense! Turn it over with your knife; it moves, it wriggles back to its former position. That straw-coloured piece of broken grass about two inches long will, if you touch it, put up its hands as if in prayer. That delicate green leaflet about an inch long, resembling the young frond of a todea superba, will, if you watch for a minute or two, crawl slowly away. Not so pleasant to contemplate are the ticks and lice that infest our horses, and the great variety of spiders, ants, and other creeping and crawling things to which we have become accustomed."

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CHAPTER VII.

BEING A DETAILED ACCOUNT OF THE WRITER'S TRIP FROM BULAWAYO TILL HE REJOINED HIS REGIMENT AT MAFEKING—HIS FIRST EXPERIENCE UNDER FIRE.

[As the writer had decided to proceed with General Carrington's staff to Mafeking, and as he preceded his own regiment, who were sent down to Mafeking in detachments after they had arrived once more in Bulawayo, it may prove of interest to describe his varied experiences on the road.]

We left Bulawayo by the 2.30 p.m. train on Wednesday, August 1. The journey, which occupied forty-two hours, was very interesting to me. The country passed through was of an undulatng nature. In the distance lines of mountains, though far off, appeared quite close and distinct in the clear, crisp, South African air. The heat, during the day, was almost intolerable, but the views of the mountains were most beautiful, and the sunsets were truly grand. The pretty scenes, the mysterious, far-stretching lands, the wide sweeps of open country alternating with woods and thickets close by the side of the line, the quaint little corrugated iron stations with their stores and refreshment rooms, and the native villages were new to me, and the sight of them was vividly impressed on my mind. At many of the smaller stations there were chances of getting tea, coffee, or mineral waters, and longer stoppages were made at the larger stations for regular meals. I had no opportunity of judging what the latter were like, not having with me the coin necessary to purchase one. Every time a stoppage was made for meals I took a couple of biscuits and my pot of jam as far away as possible from the tempting smell, and wrestled with a well-developed appetite.

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Shortly after 7 a.m. on the 3rd, the appearance of the surrounding country suggested our close proximity to Mafeking; and I then realised, for the first time, some of the actual realities of modern warfare. Lengths of steel rails and iron telegraph poles, twisted into almost unrecognisable shapes, were strewn alongside the track. Now we passed a few sheets of corrugated iron which marked the spot where, not long before, had been one of those neat little stations with which we had became so familiar. A burnt patch showed where there had once been a native location; and a stray goat would have found it a hard matter to make a meal on what was left of the maize crop.

Approaching nearer to Mafeking the damage caused by the Boers was even more apparent. Sections of the railway lines that had been blown up bodily by dynamite lay like huge ladders alongside the line, while the presence of a large heap of twisted iron, broken axles and wheels, marked the place where a train-load of dynamite, sent out by Baden-Powell from Mafeking during the siege, had been blown up by the Boers, but with disastrous results to themselves. Just before entering the town, the presence of numerous headstones and simple crosses, marking the last resting places of those that had given up their lives in defence of the beleaguered town, suggested the cemetery; but the loop-holed walls, crowned with bags of sand, the appearance of two Tommies doing "sentry-go," gave it the appearance of a fort. It was, indeed, a queer place to fight in, but, as a Tommy would say, it had its advantages—"If a cove were to be shot, his burial would cause but little trouble to his mates."

The train steamed into the battered little station shortly after 8 o'clock. The appearance of the latter gave one an idea of the damage done by the Boer shell-fire. Leaving the station I took a stroll through the town. I said town, but it was really only a large village built on the open veldt, and wholly unsheltered from the heavy winds that prevail in the district. In the centre of the town was the market

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THE CEMETERY, MAFEKING, SHOWING SANDBAG ENTRENCHMENTS.

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square, surrounded on all sides by the principal shops and hotels, built mostly of brick, and plastered and whitewashed. The damage caused by the Boers during the siege was everywhere apparent. Here, a heap of bricks and mortar showed where a house had once stood, while there stood a church with one wall blown down. In fact nearly all the buildings showed that shot and shell had been in contact with them. At every turn one met with rifle pits and trenches, while every house had its sand-bag fort and earthworks thrown up for protection. The population seemed to be made up of "niggers," officers, and a few civilians. The former, of course predominated, and were for the most part lean and hungry looking, and dressed in a variety of togs that baffled all description.

Shortly after our arrival in Mafeking we learnt that part of the Rhodesian Field Force, under the temporary command of Brigadier-general Errol, had left on July 26 with the ostensible object of relieving Colonel Hoare, who, with a number of Australians, was in a tight place at Eland's River. General Sir Frederick Carrington had left on the 31st, and was to take up Lord Errol's command on arriving at Zeerust. On hearing this Colonel Grey decided to push on, with the remainder of General Carrington's staff, in an endeavour to catch up with the General and force, before they reached Eland's River. We accordingly left Mafeking that afternoon, accompanied by two mule waggons carrying rations and forage. After we had trekked seven miles in a wetserly direction, we crossed the border into the Transvaal. This move was of some importance to me, for by it I became entitled to a war medal. Darkness having fallen, the party bivouacked for the night.

Moving out from camp at daylight the following morning we marched thirteen miles, and reached Ottoshoop. *En route* we passed several deserted farmhouses with fences down and goats grazing on the maize crops which were just showing through the ground. One of these houses, which we visited, was built of stone and contained twelve rooms. It had

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evidently belonged to a British sympathiser, judging from its appearance. Doors, windows, and mantelpieces had been smashed to pieces; and the remains of a piano and of furniture lay scattered about one room. Books and papers had been tossed everywhere; and the place had been completely gutted and looted. In the trampled garden the headstone of a child's grave had been thrown among the strawberry beds.

Ottoshoop proved to be a pretty little township, boasting one street, on both sides of which were several very decent houses and shops built of stone, and nicely whitewashed. Riding along in the grateful shade afforded by rows of trees growing along the street, one could almost imagine himself to be in a small country village on a Sabbath morn, half expecting to hear the bell, in the pretty little church which nestled in a grove of cypress trees on the right, ringing for morning service. The effect was enhanced when, on passing the open door of a cottage, the sound of children's voices singing a hymn fell on our ears. Gazing on this peaceful scene, it was indeed hard to realise that grim war was raging throughout the country, and that the father and brothers of the children we had heard singing, were probably out on commando, or—who knows?—lying under a heap of stones somewhere out on the big, lone veldt.

Passing across a fine drift we bivouacked in a belt of timber on the opposite side of the town. All around our bivouac there were abundant signs showing where General Carrington's troops had recently been encamped. There were biscuit tins scattered about, and the remains of numerous fires, and of several dead bullocks. Some distance away dozens of vultures were feeding on the remains of fifteen horses branded R.A. (Royal Artillery) that had evidently died from horse sickness.

We moved out of Ottoshoop at daylight on August 5, and trekked till 11 o'clock, when we halted for three hours. It was at this camp that Colonel Grey had the misfortune to

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lose a favourite horse, which had died from the effects of blue tongue.

Zeerust was reached at about 7 p.m., when we camped for the night. We learnt later that General Carrington and the troops had left on the previous day for Eland's River. Zeerust, a place somewhat larger than Mafeking, was prettily situated in a fertile valley almost closed in by high hills. As at Ottoshoop, all the shops were shuttered, and the place was deserted, save by women and children, all of whom were dressed in deep mourning, and a few coolies and "niggers." Leaving Zeerust early in the morning be began the last stage of our journey, expecting to be with the troops at noon. The country so far traversed had been of a flat monotonous nature, but after we had quitted Zeerust, it improved wonderfully. Fenced and cultivated steadings were to be seen on all sides, and fine, clear, running streams were numerous, the background of ranges giving the whole a picturesque appearance.

Shortly after 11 o'clock we caught up to the rear-guard of the relief column, and, pushing on, joined the General at about five miles from Eland's River. But we had not been with the column above fifteen minutes when heavy firing in front proclaimed that we had come into contact with the enemy. Immediately all were in commotion. The column halted. Gallopers darted about here and there delivering orders. The pom-pom and the fifteen-pounder came into action with a rumble and a clatter from somewhere in the rear, and took up a position in the front. Squadrons of mounted men moved out at a gallop, and occupied positions on either flank. My first engagement had began. Pee-u-u-u-w! pee-u-u-u-w! The bullets whistled overhead, or passed close to us, and buried themselves with a nasty whir-r-rp in the ground behind. At first one did not realise the danger; but when a horse, standing a few yards off, reared up and went down all of a heap to rise no more, we quickly dismounted and sought the nearest shelter. One

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could hardly credit the force with which a bullet struck One might imagine from its size that it caused a little shock. But the men soon found that it hit like a sledge hammer—a terrific blow. An Australian with a white, set face, with the blood flowing freely from a wound in his leg, rode slowly past in the direction of the ambulance. About five hundred yards on the right front a squadron of Paget's Horse were seen to gallop to a kopje, dismount, and leave their horses at the foot, and ascend in open order. Shortly afterwards the crack, crack, of their rifles was borne faintly from among the rocks. Then came a faint, buzzing sound, growing more distinct, finally passing over; and a loud report some two hundred yards in the rear a few seconds later told us that it was a shell. Another buzz, and a second shell landed within twenty yards of the General. Our guns were now in action, and together with the rifle fire, the bursting of shells, and the decided crack of the pom-poms, created an awful din. Apparently, the Boers held a very strong position on a rough kopje in front, as our shell fire had no effect on them; and they refused to be shifted. A rider then approached the General and reported that a large body of the enemy were threatening the right flank. The General evidently thought that things were becoming too serious, as, after holding a consultation with his officers, he gave the order to retire. During this engagement, which had lasted nearly two hours, our casualties were thirteen men wounded and ten captured. The column retired in good order for ten miles, and bivouacked for the night at Little Marico.

At 11 o'clock the following morning the outposts reported that the enemy had surrounded the camp during the night. This proved to be substantially correct, though the number of Boers could not have been great. General Carrington, however, determined to fall back on Zeerust; and we moved out of camp just before noon. A number of the enemy occupied a kopje overlooking the road along which we advanced; and they opened fire on our advance guard, wounding two of the men. However, a few well-directed

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shells from the fifteen-pounders and pom-poms soon drove them off; and we pursued the even tenor of our way, reaching Zeerust at 4 a.m. on Tuesday, after a long, tedious march.

The sight of a column on the march was indeed a novel one at that time. Looking back from an elevated position at the huge convoy as it slowly wound its way in and out along the dusty road, it had the appearance of a gigantic serpent.

A quiet day was spent in camp on Tuesday. True, the Boers harassed the outposts all day, but no casualties resulted on either side. While camped here on an open plateau on the outskirts of Zeerust, surrounded on all sides by hills, the contrast between the heat of the day and the cold at night was very marked. The heat was oppressive all day Tuesday; but, as soon as the sun had set, a hard black frost crept along the valley and settled over everything. The night was intensely cold, and as the majority of the troops were without tents, they suffered severely. A war-correspondent, acting for one of the London papers, had his hands rather badly frostbitten through exposing them from under the blankets while he was sleeping.

We held a very strong position in Zeerust. When, therefore, the order for our retirement towards Mafeking was given, the only solution that an outsider could come to seemed to be that it was a ruse to draw the enemy into more open country. Surprise was manifested on all sides when, not only was Zeerust abandoned, but several thousand pounds worth of stores and ammunition that had been sent out from Mafeking for the use of the column, were ordered to be destroyed. These stores were stacked in a huge pile, which was set on fire, and which was burning merrily when we moved off.

Similarly Ottoshoop was left to the enemy; and Mafeking was reached on the morning of Friday, August 10.

Summed up then, the first movement of the R.F.F. had been a complete failure. We had left Mafeking with

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the intention of relieving the garrison at Eland's River, but had been forced to retire without having accomplished that object. General Carrington was blamed on all sides, and was subsequently superseded for retiring. But it must be remembered that, in attempting the relief of the garrison, he was operating in rough country with only thirteen hundred troops, the majority of whom had never before been under fire against an enemy, holding a strong position in the hills, and knowing every inch of the country. Thus the *Mafeking Mail*, on our engagement of Monday:—"General Carrington's forces were completely hemmed in, but gallantly cut their way through."

Learning, on arrival, that the Fourth and Fifth New Zealand regiments had come through from Bulawayo the previous day, I left the staff and rejoined my regiment.

Mafeking, when occupied by some two thousand troops, proved to be a much livelier place than it was on the occasion of my first visit. Making a tour through the principal streets one met officers, ranging in rank from a general to a lieutenant. Khaki-clad Tommies and Colonials seemed to be as thick as blackberries in season; mule waggons —some empty, others carrying rations and forage—were continually passing to and fro; and now and again strings of horses passed on their way to water. A large canteen had been opened in camp; and as all troops had a pay-day on August 11, it was well patronised during our stay. A small incident, which will serve to show the condition of the Kaffirs in Mafeking at that time, occurred on Sunday. On the morning of that day one of our horses died from horse-sickness. As is usual in the case of a horse, or any other animal, dying at a permanent camp, a fatigue party was told off to bury the carcase. On finding the spot where the horse had lain some two hours previously, the party found that the niggers had cut the animal up for food. They had evidently acquired a taste for horse-flesh during the seige. Small wonder then that disease was so prevalent among the Kaffirs in Mafeking!

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GRAVES OF DEFENDERS OF MAFEKING DURING SIEGE.

(1) Capt. Fred Crewe, (2) Capt. R. H. Girdwood, (3) Capt. J. Vernon, (4) Lieut. H. Paton, (5) Capt. H. C. Sanford, (6) Capt. K. Pechelle.

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CHAPTER VIII.

With the Fourth from Mafeking.

The column, which had been considerably strengthened by the addition of the Fourth and Fifth New Zealand regiments and half a battery of artillery, and which was still under the command of General Carrington, moved out of Mafeking in the direction of Ottoshoop on Tuesday, August 14. That the regiment was out on a business trek at last, after indulging in nearly four months monotonous trekking in Rhodesia, was evinced from the fact that each man was allowed only two blankets, an oil sheet, an extra pair of socks, and an extra shirt, the rest of the kit being left behind in Mafeking. In addition, each man carried his great-coat strapped across his saddle. Tents were dispensed with; and those troopers that had acted as regimental camp cooks returned to the ranks, each man being expected to boil his own canteen when chance offered.

We left again at daylight the next morning after having camped for the night seven miles from Mafeking. Ottoshoop was reached after 1 o'clock the same day. The Boers indulged in some sniping at our outposts just before sunset, without, however, doing any harm. Rumours, or bush telegrams, emanating from no one knew where, were rife in camp that evening. Some were to the effect that we were surrounded by a large body of the enemy, and others that the column was to move out at daylight next morning and to attack the enemy who were supposed to hold a strong position some two miles away.

Wednesday, the 16th, broke fine and clear. The majority of us had been fully expecting a brush with the enemy; but as the morning wore on and no movement had been ordered in camp, we came to the conclusion that our

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expectations were not to be realised. At 11 o'clock our commanding officer was ordered to tell off sixty men to ride back to the border and act as escort to a convoy that was coming through from Mafeking. Two troops of A Squadron were warned off; and by mid-day we were in the saddle. Along the dusty streets of the straggling little township of Ottoshoop we rode past the long lines of troops and waggons, past the ambulance waggons, past the camp of the chaplains, and out on to the open veldt. We escorted five traction engines, each with four waggons attached. These were the "empties" going back to Mafeking, and carrying several sick and wounded men, besides three prisoners. We reached the border at 5 p.m., and camped to await the arrival of the convoy from Mafeking. A little after 10 o'clock the head of the convoy appeared, but it was midnight before the tail came into camp, as the whole consisted of fifty-six waggons, drawn by eight hundred and ninety-six oxen. When the hoarse yells and shrieks of the drivers had subsided, and silence once more reigned, we dozed off.

The sentry aroused us at 2.30 a.m., and we began our return journey. We saw no signs of Boers on the way, and reached Ottoshoop shortly after 1 p.m. Riding into the village we were struck by its deserted appearance. The chaplains had gone, the troops and mule waggons had vanished, the ambulance waggons—no, there were half a dozen of them backed up against one of the larger houses in the main street. But where were the troops? Our camping ground was vacant. Lieut. J. R. MacDonald, the officer in charge of the escort, cantered ahead for information; and we troopers, after having watered and fed our horses, were proceeding to boil our canteens, when our officer returned. He said: "Men, I have bad news for you. Captain Harvey has been shot dead, Captain Fulton is wounded, Trooper M'Dougal, of C Squadron, is killed, and eight others are wounded." It seemed incredible. We could hardly realise it. When we had left on escort duty, twenty-

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four hours previously, there had seemed no chance of our squardon's going into action.

We had fully expected to remain at Ottoshoop till the following morning; but the Staff Colonel in charge informed our officer that he would have to push on until the main body were picked up. So we started away at 9 o'clock, trailed along in the darkness, and struck the rear-guard of the main body at half-past 1. It was 3 a.m. before the end of the convoy was in; and as we could find no trace of our own particular regiment, we ringed our horses in a vacant place in the sleeping camp, and, thoroughly tired out, lay down alongside them till dawn. In the morning we learned that our regiment was still holding the kopje that had cost them so dear.

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CHAPTER XI.

The Fourth's First Engagement.

The following account is taken from a letter, from Lieut. J. R. MacDonald, that appeared in the *Otago Daily Times*.

"Firing had been going on all the morning of the 16th of August to the east of our camp at Ottoshoop. The 1st Brigade was in action, and the 2nd Brigade was still in camp. The Fourth Contingent were standing about in groups here and there, bewailing their hard fortune—just our luck, always to be left behind,—when, at 1 o'clock, came the order to mount. The squadron swept in extended line over the open, undulating country for four or five miles, halted and dismounted under cover of a green-bushed kopje. Half a-mile farther on was a brown hill, the sides of which, strewn with rocks and stones, and dotted over with stunted, leafless trees, had been burned by the Boers the day before. An order came from Colonel Grey that this kopje, known as Lemmer's Hill, was to be taken. The order was passed on, and Captains Fulton and Harvey, with Lieutenants Tubman and Bauchop, started, taking with them in all about sixty men.

"Between the two kopjes lay an open, grassy valley. The Fourth Contingent was about to show of what mettle it was composed. The day that they had so long waited for had come at last. After five months of hope and despair the first engagement was at hand. As eagerly as they had often followed the ball at the kick-off in the football field the slender dotted line of khaki-clad figures advanced down the open, grassy slope. They were light-hearted enough, but Major Davies had not been fighting the Boers during the last nine months for nothing. He knew.

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"They had reached the bottom of the slope and plunged up to their knees in a swamp. Still no shot from the enemy. The rough, burnt hillside lies in front of them. Captain Fulton and Lieut. Tubman take the right, Captain Harvey and Lieut. Bauchop the left. At the hill they go, sorely impeded by heavily-laden haversacks, in addition to one hundred rounds of ammunition per man. Halfway up the hill, and still no sign of the enemy. 'I wish I had my horse here,' panted Sergeant Hickey, as the pace began to tell. 'Come on boys, or No. 10 will beat us,' answered Captain Fulton. Upward, still upward they held their way. They are within fifty yards of the top. Still no fire from those rocks above. Only forty yards more, thirty yards,—'They can't be there, sir,' gasps a labouring trooper,—twenty yards, when crash comes the volley that disproves that remark, and Sergeant Hickey falls in a strange helpless heap. 'Take cover, men!' shouts Captain Fulton, and he too goes down. Then Sutherland falls. The advance is checked, and every man is flat among the black cinders of the burnt tussocks. The stones are hardly bigger than a man's head, but they afford some shelter from the bullets that are now flying like hail.

"This was on the right. And by now Captain Harvey and his men had reached the summit on the left. Along with them was Lieut. Bauchop. Taking cover, they opened fire at once, dropping two or three Boers, and drawing part of the enemy's fire from Captain Fulton's troops upon themselves. Then, fixing bayonets, they prepared to charge. The top of the kopje was perfectly flat and open, forming an irregular circle about eighty yards in diameter. The enemy were still on the right of the hill. Captain Harvey got on his feet to head the rush across this open space, but had not gone more than fifteen yards when he fell, shot through the head.

"In the meantime two troops were ordered to mount and reinforce the firing line. As they galloped across the valley they were subjected to a heavy fire, and Dr. Watt,

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who pluckily mounted and rode after them, met with the same reception. A few minutes more and our men were in possession of the hill-top, and the Boers were running for their lives down the farther side.

"All that night the victorious troops lay without blankets on the top of that cold kopje. All that night our doctor and half a dozen men toiled up and down the steep hillside, carrying the wounded men to the valley. All next day and all next night the same troops were left to occupy the kopje, but on the third day, as we met them marching back into camp, their faces black with the burnt grass, and their eyes sunken from want of sleep, we, who had missed it all, had but two feelings—admiration of their splendid attack, and bitter disappointment that we had not been in it.

"This is only a rough, fragmentary description of the engagement, as I learnt the particulars of it from officers and men who had been through it, and from those who witnessed if from the first kopje. I also spent a couple of hours in going over the ground with an officer who had watched the whole affair. And where was I? Eighteen miles away, with sixty men acting as escort to a convoy! Did you ever hear of such hard luck? I had Nos. 2 and 3 troops of A Squadron with me. We had not left the camp more than an hour when the other troop of A Squadron, and the whole of B Squadron were ordered out for their first engagement. And we missed it all. We could only envy them."

It may be added. The splendid behaviour of our men in storming the hill was the general topic of conversation among the other regiments. Brigadier Grey, in brigade orders of the 17th, expressed himself as follows:—"The officer commanding desires to congratulate the brigade on the good work done yesterday. Every position required by the Lieut.-general commanding was taken quickly and without hesitation, and held during the night. The advance to

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THE LATE CAPT. J. A. HARVEY.

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the attack was made with splendid precision and order. Colonel Grey desires specially to thank the Fourth New Zealand Regiment, who bore the brunt of the attack, and he deeply deplores the loss of Captain Harvey. He has great pleasure in informing the brigade that the general officer commanding has expressed his entire satisfaction with its work."

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CHAPTER X.

Round about Ottoshoop and Zeerust—A Detailed Account of our Doings from Day to Day.

After remaining idle in camp for two days the column retired to Ottoshoop, arriving there on the evening of the 19th. The following day the mounted troops, accompanied by two pom-poms and two fifteen-pounders, and under the command of Colonel Grey, moved out along the Malmani Valley for the purpose of destroying a flourmill situated some five miles off. We had proceeded but two miles, in a southerly direction from Ottoshoop, when we came into contact with the enemy; and troop after troop was soon engaged on the undulating country on our left flank. C and D Squadrons of the Fourth, under Captain-adjutant Arbuthnot, galloped out to support this flank, A squadron being ordered to occupy a kopje on the right. Reaching this kopje we dismounted, and, leaving our horses at the foot, ascended in open order to the top, to the whistling accompaniment of bullets. On reaching the summit we opened fire at eight hundred yards, on a squadron of the enemy who were riding slowly off. Our fire appeared to do no damage, however; and they soon disappeared from sight in the shelter afforded by a large kopje, two miles off. Meanwhile the bullets fired by a number of the enemy occupying a position in a thick clump of trees some eight or nine hundred yards away on our right front, were kicking up the dust in all directions, one man having his rifle shattered in his hands, and another being slightly wounded in the shoulder. While engaged with the Boers in front, we were suddenly subjected to a heavy cross-fire from the left flank, where we had little or no shelter; and we experienced a lively

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five minutes until reinforced by a troop of Australians, when the enemy were driven off. Colonel Grey, evidently considering that the enemy were too numerous to admit of our proceeding further, ordered a retirement on Ottoshoop, which place we, tired and hungry, reached late in the afternoon.

In this engagement our adjutant, Captain Arbuthnot, who had behaved so pluckily at Lemmer's Hill where Captain Harvey was killed, was shot through the groin, and from the effects of this wound he died at Makeking shortly afterwards. Private J. C. M'Lean, of A Squadron, was also slightly wounded during the retirement. We had thus, early in the campaign, suffered the loss of five officers—Captains Harvey and Arbuthnot killed, Captain Fulton and Lieut. Collins wounded, while our commanding officer, Colonel Francis, was invalided home.

During the next three weeks the column lay idle at Ottoshoop, awaiting orders from headquarters. Of this camp I still retain the liveliest recollections. The regiment was bivouacked on the open veldt at the back of the town, where, being without tents, we were at the mercy of the elements. Hot sultry days, accompanied by heavy winds that raised clouds of red dust which pervaded everywhere, making the food almost uneatable, were the general rule. The nights were cold, and the wet season being upon us, the frequent tropical downpours did not add to our comfort. Firewood was scarce; and it was therefore almost impossible for us to cook the flour that was issued in place of biscuits. The incessant round of fatigues, outposts, picquets, and escort duties, added to our troubles and made not a few of the men wish they had never become soldiers of the Queen.

On the 27th of August General Methuen's column passed through Ottoshoop *en route* to Mafeking. These troops had been engaged for several weeks in fruitless pursuit of the Boer general, De Wet, and their travel-stained

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appearance—the majority of them being in rags—bore testimony to the fact that they had experienced a very rough time.

Rain fell heavily all day on the 28th making our outpost duties most uncomfortable. On the following day our regiment was occupied in escorting a convoy from Mafeking, and we experienced a long and tiring day. Returning to camp shortly after sunset we fed and watered the horses and were partaking of our own scanty meal, when signs of an impending storm became apparent. Threatening banks of clouds crept slowly up. The low rumbling of approaching thunder, accompanied by occasional flashes of lightning, could be heard in the distance. A mysterious stillness, that which usually precedes a South African storm, broken only by the hoarse croaking of innumerable frogs, settled over everything. Large drops of rain began to fall, causing us to seek the shelter of our bivouacs, rudely constructed on the bare ground though they were. Soon the storm burst in all its fury. The roar of the thunder, the vivid flashes of forked and zig-zag lightning, together with howling winds, was awful. The rain descended in torrents, flooding the camping ground, and forcing us to flee to the shelter afforded by some houses in the township, leaving our blankets, saddles, and other belongings completely submerged. After lasting for an hour the storm cleared, everything being in a fearful state in camp. Later on we learnt that this storm was even more severely felt in Mafeking than in Ottoshoop. There it wrecked the hospital, a huge canteen, and several corrugated iron buildings, besides killing fifteen natives.

On the 30th Major Davies was appointed our commanding officer, vice Lieut.-Colonel Francis, invalided; and a few days later Captain F. de B. Young, Sixth Bengal Cavalry, was appointed second in command and adjutant of the Fourth N.Z.R.R., vice Captain Arbuthnot, killed in action. Camp was shifted on to higher ground across the

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CARDIGAN FORT, MAFEKING, MANNED BY FOURTH ROUGH RIDERS.

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drift on 1st of September; and several fatigue parties went out collecting firewood. We spent a quiet day in camp on the 2nd, a few shots being exchanged between the outposts and the enemy, without, however, causing any damage. General Carrington, with several of his staff officers, left Ottoshoop on September 3rd, having been superseded by General Douglas.

On the 9th of September the whole column, with the exception of C Squadron of the Fourth, moved out of Ottoshoop along the Malmani Valley on the Lichtenberg road. When about two miles out of Ottoshoop we met with the enemy, who were in strong force on the left flank and in front. After engaging for some time they were driven off, leaving in our hands thirty prisoners, twenty-two waggons, two helios, three bicycles, and 40,000 rounds of ammunition. Privates Alf. Roberts and E. White, of A Squadron, were wounded, the former severely, while retiring from the left flank. Sergeant Collis had his horse shot dead, and the horse ridden by Private C. Duff was shot clean through the head, without, however, causing it any serious inconvenience.

We bivouacked at 3 o'clock that afternoon at Naauwport, and next morning moved off at 5, A Squadron of the Fourth acting as escort to the guns. After an uneventful trek of some miles we camped at Wanderfontein; and at daylight the following morning the enemy opened fire on the outposts, but were soon put to flight. Later on in the day some of the Fifth New Zealand Contingent engaged with the enemy, two of their number being wounded by the enemy's pom-pom fire.

Quitting Klipkraal, a large water-hole at which we had camped, the column marched off with the Imperial Bushmen acting as advance-guard. After marching about six miles camp was pitched at a small village called Manana; but we had not been there long when it was reported that a number of Boers with several waggons could be seen some distance

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away. The Sixth Imperial Bushmen and Fourth New Zealand Regiment were sent in pursuit. Riding in extended order we galloped for about three miles, and after exchanging shots with a number of mounted Boers, encircled and captured the convoy, which consisted of fifty oxen, ten waggons, three cape-carts, sixteen horses, four hundred sheep, with twenty-one rifles, and three thousands rounds of ammunition. Two Australians, a lieutenant and a corporal, were shot dead in this engagement. The following notice of the encounter appeared in Regimental Orders:—"The G.O.C. attributes the grand results of the operations to the rapid advance and energetic action of the Second Brigade, R.F.F."

At 11.15 a.m. on the 13th of September the column reached Lichtenberg, and camped just out of the town. Lichtenberg, situated in the middle of the open veldt, its houses hidden from view by the thickly-planted weeping willows round about, presented the appearance of a cemetery. The town was at once placed "out of bounds" for all troopers unless accompanied by an officer. This order had little effect, however, and numbers of the men were soon dodging in and out of the houses in the back streets in quest of bread, flour, and provisions. During the afternoon several commandeering parties from the regiment were sent to the out-lying farms to collect green fodder, and oaten sheaves for the horses, with orders to burn all waggons that might be found there belonging to the Boers. Poultry, pigs, and fruit were plentiful; and we troopers indulged in a little commandeering on our own account, returning to camp shortly after 4 o'clock laden with good things. Before turning in for the night, a "tot" of rum was issued by the quartermaster-sergeant.

The 4th Regiment, acting as advance and flank guards to the main body, left Lichtenberg the following day with the column, and after an uneventful five miles' trek, went into camp at Reit Kuil. We make the following ex-

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tract from the Regimental Orders of that day, 15th of September:—"No. 1 Column under Lieut-General Lord Methuen is moving south, and about fifteen miles to the west of us. The following message has been received from him per heliograph—'I am very glad to hear of the successful work of your No. 2 Column, but much regret to hear of the loss of Lieut. R. J. White and Lance-corporal A. King, of the 6th Imperial Bushmen.'"

Next morning A Squadron acted as escort to the ox convoy and guns, B Squadron marched with the main body, and D Squadron, together with two companies of Northumberland Fusiliers, formed the rear-guard to the column. During the five hours' trek, the flank-guard of Australian Bushmen came into touch with a number of Boers, but no casualties were recorded. It fell to the lot of B Squadron to escort the guns on our next trek, the remaining two squadrons marching with the main body; and, after a tedious trek of thirteen miles over barren and waterless country, the column went into bivouac at Leeuw Kuil. To turn once again to the Regimental Orders, it may be of interest to note the following information:—"The objective of No. 1 and No. 2 Columns is Schweigen Reneke (east of Vryberg), where a garrison is surrounded by two thousand six hundred Boers. A commando of about fifty men left this place yesterday and retired in the direction of Biejesvlei. Two houses were fired last evening. Soldiers caught firing buildings will be tried by D.C.M., which has power to award imprisonment with hard labour up to two years. Natives will be punished with fifty lashes. The Transport Officer will see that conductors make all native drivers aware of this. Horses 1383, 1490, 3420, having been destroyed, are struck off the strength of the regiment."

Our next trek was over sixteen miles of country to Barberspan. No. 1 Column, under Lord Methuen, was moving out as we entered, having been camped there for twenty-four hours. Barberspan, as the name suggests, was

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a fairly large lagoon, around which were three or four deserted Boer houses. The water in the pan was very salty, being quite unfit for man or beast to drink. Around its edge were the skeletons of thousands of fish, some of them being very large and resembling, in every particular, fish inhabiting the deep seas. During the afternoon several fatigue parties were engaged sinking wells in an endeavour to secure a supply of fresh water for the camp. These attempts were futile, however; and it was decided to shift camp to Leeuwpan, some seven miles away to the north, where good water was obtainable. We remained in camp at Leeuwpan for eight days; and it proved to be one of the worst camps we had struck on trek. We were bivouacked on the open veldt, unsheltered from the heavy winds that prevailed every day. Fine red dust penetrated through everything, even the food being rendered almost uneatable. Added to this the monotonous daily round of guards, fatigues, outpost, and other duties, made the lot of the troops anything but an enviable one. About this time a heliograph message was received from Lord Roberts containing the information that President Kruger and Mr Reitz, late Secretary of State for the Z.A.R., had left the Transvaal, and had taken refuge in Portuguese territory.

A sports meeting was held in camp on the 22nd, and there the tug-of-war, the principal event, was won by the 6th Imperial Bushmen. A mule race, in which over eighty mules took part, caused great amusement, and was won by an Australian, while a New Zealander took third place. A band belonging to the 5th Northumberland Fusiliers discoursed excellent music during the afternoon. A camp-fire concert was organised for the same evening; and all then not on duty were given leave to attend. These open-air concerts were always looked forward to with pleasure by the majority of the men, helping, as they did, to break the monotony of camp life. Picture the huge bonfire close to which a rude platform had been erected. Around it several hundreds of men of all descriptions were gathered—

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some sitting, others standing two or three deep in a circle—listening intently to the efforts of the different performers. A Tommy with a decided Cockney accent was heard to advantage in the well-known coster song "The Old Kent Road." Then an officer of a colonial regiment recited "The Man from Snowy River," for which he received an encore. So they went on, the men joining heartily in the chorus of any well-known song that was given. As the fire died down, the singing of the National Anthem by the hundreds of assembled soldiers brought to a close a performance that still lingers in one's memory.

The following was heliographed from General Methuen on the 22nd:—"When marching from Jack Kraal on the morning of the 20th, a Boer commando of 400 men, with a gun and a maxim, was reported moving north-east. We pursued and captured twenty-eight prisoners, three Cape-rebels, one fifteen-pounder, of the 14th battery, taken by the Boers at Colenso, and a convoy of twenty-six waggons, cape-carts, eight hundred head of cattle, three thousand sheep, twenty thousand rounds of ammunition, and some rifles." "Reached Reitpan on the 21st inst. without opposition. Captured six hundred and eighty-four cattle, twenty-nine horses, twenty-four donkeys, and some three thousand sheep."

On Sunday, 23rd of September, a large open-air church parade was held in camp; and on the 25th A Squadron of the Fourth escorted a large mob of captured stock that had been received from Methuen, to Kunana. We had left camp at midnight expecting to be a long way on the road before daylight; but in this we were disappointed, as the native guide lost his way in the darkness, and when day broke, we found that we had been travelling in a circle and were only two miles from our starting point. We made a fresh start and reached Kunana at 2 p.m., and handed over the cattle to a body of native police. After a spell of an hour we started on the return journey to camp, arriving

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there just before midnight. All hands were thoroughly tired out having been in the saddle for 23 hours.

After the column had moved out of Leeuwpan at 2.45 a.m. on the 26th with A Squadron as rear-guard, we had a brush with the enemy, eight of whom were captured, before reaching Leeuw Kuil. We left the latter place before daylight next morning, marching on the road to Reit Kuil in different order, A Squadron acting as flank-guard, B Squadron as escort to the ox convoy, D being with the main body. At about 4 o'clock a number of the enemy attacked the outpost, which was formed of B and D Squadrons, and the mounted men saddled up and went out at a gallop. A few shots were exchanged before the enemy were driven off. On our trek to Manana, the next camping ground, the Australian advance-guard were in touch with the enemy, and had seven of their number wounded. During the march of fourteen miles to Dinkerfontein we continually heard the big guns of General Methuen's column booming away on the right flank.

On 29th of September an order, with reference to the measures that were to be taken in attacking, and especially in surprising, the enemy, was received from the Brigadier. It ran—"The Brigadier must impress on all ranks the absolute necessity for scouting any position held by the enemy, and for ascertaining his dispositions previous to the attack. It is not often that the Boers are surprised, owing to their peculiar training, and it makes it, therefore, of the utmost importance that, in attacking and endeavouring to surprise them, it should first be ascertained as far as possible that they are not on the alert. Dash, combined with prudent dispositions, so that the attack may be successful, and at the same time that a retreat may be covered, is a safe road to success; but the greatest precaution should at all times be taken, and a covering party, if only a few men, be invariably detailed to cover the attacking force. The party should be posted in the best position for keeping

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down the fire of the enemy, and covering the retreat if necessary; and the following distances should be maintained by the advance guard—Between advance and support, 500 yards; support and reserve, 600 yards; reserve and main body of mounted troops, 600 yards. These distances are measured from the main body to the front; and the various portions of the advance guard must conform to the movements of main body."

The column moved off on the 30th of September at 4.15 a.m., arriving in camp at Reitpan shortly before noon. We then heard that General Methuen's column was in camp about two miles away, having come in the previous evening. This column had been in daily contact with the enemy ever since leaving Ottoshoop, and had had a most successful march.

On Monday, 1st of October, we were again on the move this time towards Vlakfontein, which we reached at 11 o'clock, having been in the saddle since 4.30 a.m. We learnt there that Commandant Lemmer, with a fifteen-pounder, was within striking distance on the west. Thereupon A and B Squadrons were ordered to be in position for outpost by 4 a.m., B Squadron to occupy the kopje to the west, A Squadron the kopje to the south-west. The above were further ordered to remain in position until such time as the whole column, including the ox convoy, moved off. The two squadrons were then to form the rear guard to the whole column, keeping at a sufficient distance to prevent its being shelled, the rear and north flank being considered the most dangerous positions. However, the anticipated attack by the Boers did not come off, although the rear guard was subjected to some sniping from a number of the enemy. The trek itself was one of eight miles over open country; and we bivouacked for the rest of the day at Kleinfontein.

The country covered by the column from Ottoshoop had been bare, barren, flat, and monotonous, unrelieved by hills

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of any description. Water and firewood had been scarce throughout; and the majority of the farmhouses that we passed were deserted. In some cases only the walls of the latter remained, the roofs having been removed for firewood by the troops of previous passing columns. But from Vlakfontein the aspect of the country underwent a complete change. Long, low lines of kopjes stretched away on all sides, pretty little farmhouses were scattered about, while the majestic line of mountains, known as the Magaliesberg Range, could be seen in the far distance. No mariner could have welcomed the sight of land after a lengthy voyage more eagerly than we soldiers did the hills and valleys after our long trek over the open, deserted veldt.

On October 3rd the mounted men met once again with the enemy, who held a kopje on the left flank. Our two fifteen-pounders came into action and drove them out. One of the Fifth New Zealand Regiment was wounded, besides one of the Australians. The following morning was a beautiful one; and, as we, acting as rear and flank guards, rode slowly along the valley past neat little farms, orange groves, and patches of green maize, with prettily-feathered birds and gaudy-coloured butterflies darting about, we began to feel once more that even a soldier's life was worth living. Roode Kloof was reached a little after mid-day; and we formed our bivouac there.

The 5th of October saw the column on the march to Commissie Drift, D Squadron being put on outpost duty on arrival there. General Methuen's column were encamped some three miles in advance of our column; and from him our officer received the news that sixteen Boer guns, including a Long Tom, had been found in the Crocodile River, bringing the total number of guns taken during the six weeks to forty-five. He also heard that Commandant General Botha's army had been dispersed, that ex-President Steyn was wandering round the Transvaal, and that everything was quiet in Orange River Colony.

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General Methuen visited Major-general Douglas in our camp at Commissie Drift. We remained at that place for two days, during which time several commandeering parties were sent out into the surrounding country. As no troops had visited the outlaying farms previous to our arrival, we secured any amount of poultry, pigs, and fruit, which were all much appreciated, for we had been on half rations for some time. Reconnoitring parties came into contact, at different times, with the enemy; but the latter were never in force, and casualties on either side were slight. All those off duty in camp occupied their spare time in writing home, and in washing their clothing. On Sunday, the 7th, the regiment paraded at 9 a.m. for divine service, which was conducted by the chaplain attached to the Sixth Australian Bushmen. Having on that day secured a supply of sugar—which commodity we had been without for some time—from Methuen's column, the O.C. sanctioned the issue of two and a-half ounces per man per day, and an issue of an extra quarter of a pound of tinned meat per man as well.

The column moved out of Commissie Drift on Monday, the 8th of October; and we passed through Oliphants' Nek to Rustenberg. This trek was made interesting to us from the fact that De Wet had taken the same route through the Magaliesberg Mountains some weeks previously, and had given the British the "slip" when almost hemmed in by several columns. At Rustenberg we found in camp other large British columns comprising some thousands of troops. The town, or village rather, was situated in the centre of a large plateau, which stretched away to the surrounding hills on all sides. As we rode through the main street in columns of four, we could not help remarking on its dilapidated appearance. Everywhere were the evident traces of the heavy fighting that had occurred from time to time in the near vicinity. Several of the head-stones on the graves in the little cemetery were broken off short. The windows of a number of houses and shops were boarded up; and all showed the marks made by shot and shell.

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The following day, the 4th Regiment, with the exception of A Squadron, moved out, in an easterly direction, with the Maxim battery, and, marching eight miles, took up a position at Magatos Pass to await the arrival of the column, which appeared the next day. As the Boers were known to be in strong force in the vicinity, special instructions were issued to the outposts, which were occupied by our regiment as follows:—Right post, Lieut. Thompson and ten men; advance post, Lieut. Arthur and fifteen men; post on road, one N.C.O. and three men; centre post, one N.C.O. and three men; left post, Lieut. Rolleston and ten men; rear post, Lieut. Macdonald and eight men. One Maxim gun was placed covering the road to the west, and another covering the road to the east. An alarm signal of three sharp whistles was arranged, and on its sounding every man in camp was to fall in on the road with rifle, bayonet, and bandolier. Strict silence was to be maintained, and under no circumstance whatever was retirement from any post permitted. However, the night passed without our receiving a visit from the Boers; and at daylight we were relieved by the 6th I.B. The column remained all day on the 10th in possession of the pass without hearing from the enemy, though we knew from Regimental Orders that General De La Rey, with seven hundred men and guns, was supposed to be in position on the little Twee River at Wyefontein about eleven miles west of Magatos Pass, and that the main laager with ninety waggons was said to be at Bulhock, fifteen miles north-west of the pass. The following was also published, in Regimental Orders, for information:—"Three privates of the 5th Fusiliers were tried by Field C.M., on the 9th inst., for receiving, knowing them to be stolen, certain articles of supply belonging to the ox convoy; and they were sentenced to one year's imprisonment with hard labour."

It was the 11th of October when the column left Magatos Pass at 4 a.m., and reached Reitfontein eight hours later. The enemy kept up a good deal of sniping all day, wounding two of the mounted troops. It appeared that General De La

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Rey, having heard that two columns were operating against him—one from the east and another from the west,—retired west with seven guns and five hundred men, leaving behind three hundred men; and it must have been these men that had fired on the column.

After quitting Reitfontein the column trekked twelve miles to Waterval, and pitched camp there. In the afternoon several commandeering parties of mounted men went out of camp for the purpose of securing any fodder and cattle that might be found at the outlying farmhouses, and for the burning of waggons and other conveyances that would be of use to the Boers on commando. The spice of danger attending these raids, Boers in small bodies being invariably encountered about the farms, and the prospect of securing a supply of poultry, pigs, and fruit, appealed strongly to the men; and they keenly looked forward to participating in them.

Next morning at daylight the column broke up camp and went into bivouac at Boster's Hoek after a trek of twelve miles. During the march A Squadron were detailed to reconnoitre the country on the left of the column. This country was rough and hilly, and was covered with quantities of loose metal, which hurt the horses not a little. Several farms were visited at which we obtained quantities of poultry and some flour that was found planted under a hedge in the garden. At one farm we met a Boer ambulance waggon, driven by a Scottish doctor, who had lost touch with De La Rey's commando while attending to a wounded man the previous day. During the course of a very interesting conversation, the doctor informed us that he had graduated at the Edinburgh University, and was practising in Pretoria at the outbreak of the war. He mentioned that fever was very rife among the Boers on commando. That day the column captured nine prisoners, ten rifles, one ammunition waggon and ammunition, twenty-three waggons, four cape carts, seven hundred and eighty head of cattle, five hundred and forty sheep, seven horses, and one bicycle.

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On the 13th it was reported that General De La Rey, with four hundred men and four guns, had doubled back to Bokfontein on the evening of the 10th, and had passed through Waterval, our last camp, on the morning of the 11th. Having heard that No. 1 column was at Rhenoster Downs, the commando retired southwards through Lemmerfontein to Doorn Koon, about seven miles south of the spot on Eland's River, where Colonel Hoare was beseiged; but No. 1 column, General Methuen, was at Lindley Poort about six miles east from us.

The column left Boster's Hoek on Sunday, 14th of October, at 5 a.m. The 4th Regiment formed the advance and flank guards to the column. After trekking six miles we arrived at Lindley Poort and bivouacked. B and D Squadrons took up the outpost duties, A Squardon forming the inlaying picquet. (The duties of an inlying picquet are to remain in camp with horses saddled, ready at a moment's notice to move out and reinforce the outposts should the latter be attacked.)

The troops marched about eight miles on the 15th, arriving in camp at Roodvaal at 10 a.m. Two squadrons of the Australians, accompanied by a pom-pom, left camp during the afternoon on a reconnoitering expedition, and succeeded in capturing five waggons and two prisoners.

The column moved out of camp at 4.15 a.m. on its march of twelve miles to Reimhaat's Dam. Several small parties of the enemy were met with; and they indulged in some sniping at the expense of the right flank. During this march a number of Australians, while securing oranges from a grove some distance out on the left flank, were surprised by the enemy. A farrier-sergeant was killed, and two privates were wounded. Just previous to our going into camp a very bad drift had to be negotiated; and this necessitated the making of a corduroy, or track, in order to get the convoy safely across. During the afternoon General

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Methuen's column engaged the enemy some four miles in advance of our column; and the firing of his big guns could be plainly heard in our camp.

On 17th of October the 4th Regiment acted as advance and flank guards to the column, which moved out of camp at 4.45 a.m. After a trek of five miles we caught up, at Damenberg, to the rear guard of General Methuen's troop, which was also on the move. A halt was called, and our column bivouacked, that under General Methuen going into camp two miles in front. During the march the flank guards were greatly harassed by parties of the enemy, but no casualties resulted. On the arrival of the column in camp, A Squadron rode out to a long line of high kopjes situated some distance away on the left, and took up outpost duties. From there a splendid view of the surrounding country was obtained. On our front lay similar lines of kopjes, beyond which was the open veldt, stretching away as far as the eye could see. Far down in the valley behind us the camps of the two columns, with their numerous tents and with the smoke from dozens of freshly-lighted fires curling lazily upwards, formed a pretty picture in a setting of green shrubs and in a background of picturesque kopjes. That afternoon the Boers brought a gun into position on a neighbouring kopje and shelled General Methuen's camp, killing four, and wounding several men. Great consternation reigned for some time; but the gun was soon located and silenced, after which a squadron of mounted men sallied out in an endeavour to effect a capture, but did not succeed. Two of those killed were lying asleep in their tent when the first shell exploded, and were killed outright. A Squadron returned to camp shortly after dark, an outpost of Tommies taking up for the night a position closer into camp.

Then on October 18 A Squadron were roused out at 2 a.m., and ordered to re-occupy positions on outpost that had been held by them the previous day. Crawling shivering out of our warm blankets into the cold morning air, we, in our half-sleepy condition, saddled our horses as best we could

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and left camp, going in the direction of the kopjes. Arriving there we tethered our horses at the foot and, with rifles unslung, crept up as quietly as possible to the top, stumbling in the darkness over the loose stones and prickly shrubs, half expecting to be fired upon at every-step, not knowing but what the Boers had occupied the kopje during the night. Nothing of the sort occurred, however, and we were all in position before 3 a.m. Everything remained quiet till daylight, when heavy firing in the direction of the post on our right, under Lieut. Jickell, showed us that something was happening. When the firing ceased, we learnt that five of the enemy had stumbled unconsciously on the outpost. Owing to the rough nature of the ground in front, they had come right up to a cossack post held by Private J. Sorenson, before being seen. The latter at once fired a shot, which the Boers returned, wounding Sorenson in the hand and breaking his rifle. The latter then endeavoured to reach the cover of the next post, but received three more bullet wounds, and dropped like a log. The Boers then attempted to retire, but were too late, three of their number being shot dead, and the remaining two severely wounded by our men on the adjacent posts. Sorenson died shortly after his removal to a native kraal at the foot of the kopje.

When the two columns had gone some distance along the valley, our squadron descended and took up the rear guard. This proved to be the most trying march that the regiment had had since its arrival in South Africa. As we rode slowly along in open order in the rear of the convoy, the enemy kept up a constant and harassing rifle fire from behind and from the kopjes on the left, and were only deterred from approaching closer by the shrubs with which the ground was covered, and by the presence of the fifteen-pounder with us. Fighting a rear guard action is the kind of thing that tries the nerves of a soldier. There is really nothing heroic in charging a kopje at full gallop when one's blood is up. But riding slowly along, accompanied by the pinging of an invisible enemy's bullets which pass over and kick up the dust in

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front, is a totally different thing. One feels inclined to crouch down on his horse's neck and gallop for dear life.

Zeerust was ultimately reached with an addition of two wounded horses to our casualty list. The trek through from Rustenberg had occupied nine days, during which we had passed through some beautiful, hilly country, with its pretty farms sprinkled about. Poultry, fruit, and vegetables had been plentiful; and we had all of us lived really well, in marked contrast to the way we had fared on the march to and from Lichtenberg.

We make these extracts from the Regimental Orders of the 18th:—"The following casualty occurred to-day—No. 1057, Private John Sorenson, was killed in action near Damenberg. A fatigue party of ten men from A Squadron will parade under the orderly officer at 5 a.m. to-morrow for the purpose of preparing a grave in the cemetery. A funeral party of twenty men, under an officer of A Squadron, will parade at 5.45 a.m. for the purpose of burying the late Private Sorenson." And, "The Major-general Commanding compliments the 2nd Brigade on their excellent scouting and the manner in which their duties were carried out to-day."

The column halted in Zeerust for five days, and the time of the different regiments was taken up by the usual round of fatigues, outposts, guards, and other drawbacks connected with a soldier's life in a permanent camp. On the 20th the 4th Regiment proceeded along the Ottoshoop road and escorted a supply convoy back to the camp. On the way we passed the camp of General Methuen's column, which had moved out from Zeerust the previous day on a march to Ottoshoop. A colonial mail came in with the convoy; and Captain Nicolson returned to the regiment from Ottoshoop. The arrival of a mail in camp marked a red-letter day in the life of a soldier, and was eagerly looked forward to by the officers and men of all ranks. Those who received letters from home stole away to some secluded spot in camp, and perused the contents. Others, less fortunate,

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would joyfully accept the loan of a newspaper from a comrade, and would hide their disappointment as well as possible.

The regiment paraded for divine service at 8.30 a.m. on Sunday, 21st, after which B Squadron furnished the outpost and D Squadron the patrol parties for the day. On Monday A Squadron provided two patrols, which moved out of camp at daylight, returning at 10 a.m., without meeting the enemy. A camp-fire concert was held the same evening. We there received the information that General Botha's commando was in the neighbourhood of Wintershoek. No 1. and No. 2 columns then prepared to make, on the following day, a combined movement towards the latter place, and were provided with two days' rations and forage and one blanket per man. Then, on the 24th of October, No. 2 column moved out from Zeerust at 3.45 a.m. When two miles out we came into contact with the enemy, who had taken up a strong position on a rough kopje in front. Our guns came into action, and a heavy shell fire from pom-pom, fifteen-pounders, and a howitzer was directed on the kopje, the advance guard meanwhile returning nearer to the main body. After shelling this place for some two hours, A Squadron of the Fourth took up the advance, and the column resumed its march. On passing over the ground that had been shelled we noticed three dead Boers lying behind a large rock, these having been killed by a shrapnel shell, the bullets from which lay scattered around. After proceeding for about three miles, our right flank came into touch with the left flankers of General Methuen's column, which had left Ottoshoop the previous evening. Just then a Boer convoy, escorted by a number of men, was seen making off on our left front. Our mounted men at once started in pursuit, and, after a severe and exciting gallop, succeeded in capturing several waggons and a number of prisoners. The two columns went into camp a little after 3 p.m.

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The following extracts from Regimental Orders bear on this engagement:—"No 2 column engaged about five hundred Boers, with one gun and one pom-pom, of Lemmer's and Botha's commandos to-day. The Major-general desires to place on record his appreciation of the admirable work done, and the dash shown by the 2nd Brigade R.F.F. Lieut.-colonel Grey has much pleasure in expressing to the brigade his entire satisfaction with the day's work. The Commanding Officer congratulates officers, N.C.O., and men of the Fourth N.Z.R.R. on the praise received from the G.O.C., and Brigadier, and is himself much pleased with the work done. Further, the following were captured—twenty-five prisoners, fifteen loaded waggons, twenty-one rifles, seventeen thousand rounds of ammunition, one hundred and five oxen, eleven horses, and one hundred and fifty sheep." A heavy rain storm was experienced that evening, and it completely flooded our bivouac, causing all the men to turn out and walk about till daylight, there being no shelter in the vicinity.

The column remained at Kaffir's Kraal all day on the 25th, B Squadron taking up the outposts, A Squadron acting as inlying picquet. Two squadrons of I.B. left camp at daylight on a reconnoitring expedition, and succeeded in capturing a number of Boer waggons and two prisoners. In the afternoon a Boer ambulance, containing four men that had been wounded the previous day, came into camp for medical assistance. Next morning the columns returned to Zeerust, the regiment acting as rear guard, arriving at noon.

The remainder of C Squadron, which had been left on garrison duty at Ottoshoop on September 9, rejoined the regiment, together with a number of men that had been left behind in hospital. The formation of the squadrons had then to be re-arranged, for when thirty or forty of C Squadron had been told off to remain at Ottoshoop, the rest of

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that squadron were divided among A, B, and D Squardons. The men were now ordered back into their original squadrons.

On the 27th the mounted men, with a pom-pom, left camp under the command of Colonel Grey, and rode out to a village situated five miles west of Zeerust. There we obtained a large amount of forage and a supply of pigs and poultry, completely clearing out the surrounding farmhouses, and returned to camp at 11 o'clock.

Lord Methuen received a telegram from Lord Roberts, saying, "My heartfelt congratulations to yourself, Douglas, and Erroll, and all serving under you, on the success of yesterday."

On the 29th of October we were informed that the 2nd Brigade R.F.F. (with which the 4th Regiment was acting) was thenceforward to be known as the 3rd Mounted Brigade. The mounted men of the column, with several guns, moved out of Zeerust, and trekked a distance of twelve miles to Vaalkop. The regiment formed the advance and flank guards. A few Boers were met with, but their sniping produced little effect. The I.B. and the Fifth New Zealanders captured about three hundred head of cattle and a number of sheep on the road. A return to Zeerust was made the following day, and we arrived at 2.10 p.m., after a quiet march. The column had a day in camp on the 31st, when preparations were made by all ranks for an extended march to Ventersdorp. The strength of the regiment at that time was:—

22 officers
334 non-coms. and men
336 fit horses
30 unfit horses
122 mules, and
13 spare horses.

The column moved out of Zeerust for the last time at 4.30 a.m. on the 1st, and marched to our former bivouac at Kaffir Kraal. Our regiment rode along the main road

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with the guns. The advance guard of Australians engaged with a number of Boers, and after an exchange of shots, suffered the loss of one man killed and two severely wounded. Grootafddeellning, situated about ten miles from Kaffir Kraal, was our next halting place, and was reached at mid-day on the 2nd. On arrival in camp our regiment took up the outpost duties, and the following day acted as rear guard to the column on its trek of eight miles to the Lead Mines.

On the 3rd the column marched twelve miles to Mabaalstaadt, where a halt of two days was called. The country after leaving Zeerust had been flat and barren. Firewood and water were scarce; and the troops had to depend upon what they could pick up between the camps in the shape of fencing posts, etc., for boiling their canteens and cooking their rations of flour. It was laughable to see a string of mounted men riding along, carrying great logs of wood on their shoulders. In one instance two troopers, who had visited a farm some two miles from the bivouac, returned to camp bearing between them a large, plain, deal coffin, which they had unearthed from an outhouse.

From our Regimental Orders we learnt that ex-President Steyn, with about five hundred men and a few waggons, left Steinfontein, about fifteen miles north-east from Mabaalstaadt, and was in the neighbourhood of Klerksdorp. Louis Botha, De La Rey, and Dantly Botha were reported in the vicinity of Doornkoon, ten miles north-north-east from us, while General Clements and Ridley were at Leeuwfontein, twelve miles east from us. We were also warned that all animals captured from the enemy and brought to camp were Government property, and were not on any account to be taken by troops without authority, as had been done in the case of a flock of sheep which was driven through the lines that day.

Mabaalstaadt was a large native village occupied by some hundreds of Kaffirs living in well-built houses. At the time of our visit two English missionaries were quartered

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there; and they were no doubt responsible for the European appearance of the village.

The 4th Regiment proceeded some distance out of camp on the 6th on a reconnoitring expedition. A few Boers were met with but these were soon driven off. On our return to camp we came across a large mob of cattle and sheep in a gully, and these we drove back with us.

The column rode off at 3.30 a.m. on the 7th from Mabaalstaadt, and marched to Brakfontein, a distance of about ten miles. This is the spot on Eland's River that Colonel Hoare and his Australian troops defended so gallantly against the attack of the Boers. The following is a letter to the London *Times* concerning the engagement:—"Three hundred Australian Bushmen with a huge convoy were surrounded by De La Rey, who had three thousand men and eight guns. The Boers offered them freedom if they would give up their supplies. They decided they would never surrender. They held out for thirteen days, losing seventy-seven men. Of their five hundred horses only sixty were left alive. It is impossible to give you anything like an idea of what they must have gone through. It was worse than Cronje's laager. I tell you these men deserve anything the Old Country can give them."

Interest in the war is dead,
  So the papers say;
Politics alone are read—
  Kruger's had his day.
Yet before the nation grows
  Deaf with party noise,
Hoarse with howling down its foes,
  Spare a moment, boys!

Comes the convoy crawling slow
  'Cross the barren land;
Brother Boer is lying low,
  Grinning, gun in hand.
"Oh, to hear the Mauser crack!
  Oh, to see them run!
Never will they face attack—
  We are ten to one."

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Guns they speak, both great and small,
  Bullet, pom-pom, shell;
"Rooineks these, by Uncle Paul,
  Take surprises well.
Quick as we each drops and hides,
  Straight as we they shoot;
Brothers, this is bad—besides,
  How about the loot?"

Comes a Boer in friendly guise—
  "Cannot we agree?
Only give up your supplies,
  We will set you free."
Ran the answer: "Brother Boer,
  We are 'cute as you;
Do your level best, be sure
  We shall pull this through."

Day has followed deadly day;
  Thirteen times the sun
Rose on that unequal fray
  Where the ten fought one.
Horses shrieking shrill in death,
  Men amid the noise
Crying with their latest breath,
  "No surrender, boys!"

Spread the story far and wide
  How that tiny band
Gladly fought and gladly died
  For the Mother Land.
Deadly is the risk he runs
  (Ever growing more)
Who shall cross the Empire's sons
  Going forth to war.

—B. Fletcher Robinson, in the Daily Express.

A squadron of the regiment occupied the outposts surrounding the camp. On 8th November the column left Brakfontein at 4 a.m. and returned to Mabaalstaadt, A Squadron acting as rear guard during the march. Lemmer's commando was reported at Donkerfontein, about fifteen miles south-west of our camp. This order was issued:—"Officer Commanding

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the 4th Mounted Brigade will, on the march, daily detail two squadrons, one on each flank to search the country for cattle. All farms are to be searched under the supervision of an officer. Supplies, men's clothing, waggons and carts, found at houses of men on commando are to be destroyed, and all poultry may be taken, leaving 14 days' food for women and children on farm. All men found on farm to be brought in, but property, fowls, etc., of such men as are found in occupation are not to be taken without special authority of G.O.C. All cattle, sheep, and arms captured are to be reported to adjutant. Flank squadrons will search the country on either side of column for four miles."

On 9th of November the column marched off at 4 a.m. to Tafel Kop, a distance of six miles from Mabaalstaadt, and went into camp. A and B Squadrons of the Fourth rode some five miles out from the right flank, and visited several farms where some poultry and flour were obtained. We also secured several hundred head of cattle, after driving off a guard of Boers who were with them, and who followed us to within a mile of camp, sniping the whole way.

The column left camp at 8.15 p.m. on the 10th on a march of twenty-five miles to Ventersdorp. As there was no water to be obtained on the line of march, orders had been issued that all water carts and water bottles were to be filled before starting. After trekking for eleven miles a halt was called for five hours, when the horses were ringed, and all men not on duty rolled themselves up in their great coats and slept as best they could on the bare ground. We went on again at 1 a.m. and trekked eight miles, when another halt for an hour was called for the mule waggons and guns. The 4th Regiment and the I.B., however, pushed on towards Ventersdorp at a smart canter, the object being to surround the latter place before daylight in order to surprise any Boers that might be in the place. We might have been saved the trouble, as on our arrival we learnt that the enemy had vacated the town the previous evening.

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Ventersdorp proved to be a pretty little place, resembling Lichtenberg and Zeerust somewhat. On entering the town you would imagine yourself in the midst of a large park, thick with apple, peach, fig, and quince trees, intermingled with cypress and willow. That the enemy were in the neighbourhood was evident by the fact that during the afternoon a number of them rode right up to the outposts occupied by the Fifth New Zealand Regiment, and opened a heavy fire on them. On a few lyddite shells being sent among them from our guns in camp, they galloped off, leaving behind two dead. Two squadrons of the regiment, bent on commandeering, proceeded along the valley to some farmhouses. Thev encountered a party of Boers, two of whom they wounded. A member of D Squadron was also shot through the leg. They made the following captures—one prisoner, one rifle, eight hundred and ten head of cattle, eight hundred sheep, nine mules, and eight horses.

The column remained at Ventersdorp all day on the 12th. Notwithstanding that the township had been placed out of bounds for all troopers, numbers of the latter were to be seen visiting the varicus stores and houses in search of flour, bread, or anything in the shape of eatables that could e purchased. These commodities were, however, very scarce. he stores contained nothing but articles of clothing and crockery ware, and the majority of the inhabitants were living on mealie meal. Fruit was plentiful, fortunately, and a number of preserved eggs were obtained from an Indian coolie who sold them at 2s 6d per dozen. We heard that Major-general Charles Knox had captured the whole of the guns with ammunition and waggons belonging to De Wet's commando, while crossing the Vaal River. The following telegram was received from the Field Marshal, Commander-in-chief:—"To Major-general Douglas—I congratulate you on your successful march to Ventersdorp. Congratulate the Imperial Bushmen and the New Zealanders on their good work, and tell them I am informing their respective Governments by cable of their good work." The Major-

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general Commanding also congratulated the Fourth New Zealand Regiment on their successful enterprise. The following order speaks for itself:—"Complaints have been received at Ventersdorp that mounted patrols visited houses yesterday and took silver, watches, clothing, and boots. Such conduct on the part of a soldier brings disgrace upon the regiments of the mounted brigade. The punishment provided by the Army Act for such offences against the property of inhabitants is death or penal servitude. Strict orders have repeatedly been issued forbidding patrols and other bodies of troops to visit houses unless accompanied by an officer. Offenders against this rule will be tried by G.C.M., and if found in possession of stolen property will be charged with the offence and liable to above punishment. The C.O. wishes all ranks to clearly understand, once and for all, that under no circumstance is a soldier allowed to take anything from a Boer house with the intention of keeping it."

The column moved out of Ventersdorp at 4 a.m. on the 13th, and proceeded in the direction of Klerksdorp. The Sixth I.B. and the Fourth New Zealanders, under Colonel Grey, were detailed on an independent mission. Leaving the column this party proceeded some two miles out on the right, until brought to a standstill by a party of Boers that were in position on some kopjes in front. When these Boers had been ejected, a hugh mob of cattle, driven by a number of mounted men, was seen going off in the distance. Leaving a section of men in prominent positions, for the purpose of covering the retreat if necessary, we pushed on, and, after exchanging shots with the enemy, surrounded and captured the mob, which consisted of over nine hundred head of cattle and horses. As we returned, the Boers, to the number of about thirty, kept sniping at us, and succeeded in wounding four Australians. A little after noon we arrived at Klip's Drift, where we found the column bivouacked. The regiment having been paraded, were then told that Lieut.-colonel Grey desired to expressed his great satisfaction at the excellent

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manner in which the troops had that day worked. He considered it to be one of the best day's work since the column started.

Two squadrons of mounted men again operated on the right flank of the column on its march of ten miles to Palmietfontein on the 14th, and secured another lot of cattle after a brush with the Boers, two of whom we captured, and one of whom was wounded. A trek of eleven miles on the 15th took the column to Platberg, where camp was pitched. The mounted men were out all the afternoon commandeering from the neighbouring farms, and on their return to bivouac reported large captures of stock and poultry. The column started on the last stage of its journey to Klerksdorp at 4.10 a.m. on the 16th. After proceeding for eleven miles on the road, the advance and flank guard of Australians were subjected to a heavy rifle fire by a large number of the enemy on some high rough kopjes on the right. Everything was soon in commotion. The mounted men with the main body moved out in open order, accompanied by two fifteen-pounder; and things were very much mixed for some time. veldt. While the guns were taking up this position the Boers opened a heavy fire from two pom-poms and a fifteen-pounder, and things were very much mixed for some time. That we were within easy range of the kopjes was apparent as several shells passed over with a buzz, and burst away behind. With the aid of field glasses the enemy's position was soon ascertained by the officer in charge of the guns, and a few well-planted lyddite and fifteen-pounder shells, caused them to beat a hasty retreat into the hills beyond. Our march was then resumed, and Klerksdorp was reached a little before noon. Here the column went into camp on the open veldt outside the town.

This trek along the valley from Ventersdorp had proved to be the most instructive and enjoyable we had indulged in since our landing in South Africa. The 6th I.B. and the 4th Regiment had had a kind of roving commission during

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the trek, and unhampered by the duties attached to the escorting of a convoy, had taken full advantage of the opportunities afforded for commandeering cattle, horses, sheep, and poultry. What a life this was! The gallop over the veldt in the fresh morning air, the cutting out of a mob of cattle and sheep under the fire of the enemy, the raids on the poultry farms, and the return to camp with the spoils of our labours. These independent missions were always successful; and under the able command of our Brigadier (Colonel Grey), we gained experience that was of great value to us later on.

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A BUSY DAY WITH THE REGIMENTAL SADDLERS, MAFEKING.

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CHAPTER XI.

Klerksdorp to Cypherfontein.

Klerksdorp proved to be the largest Transvaal town we had yet visited, and resemble l Bulawayo in the appearance of its buildings and streets. In the centre of the town was the market square, three sides of which were occupied by numerous shops and stores. On the remaining side a handsome stone building, containing the post and telegraph offices and the town hall, was very prominent. The many pretty villas and cottages, lying scattered about beyond, formed a fine background. The town also boasted some substantial stone churches, an up-to-date school, and a well-appointed railway station. These buildings were all built of stone, and bore the date 1897. A little to the right, nestling at the foot of a picturesque kopje, lay the old town of Klerksdorp, which was occupied by the families of the original Dutch settlers. We found, as in other Transvaal towns recently visited by the column, that food and groceries were unobtainable at the stores, and learnt that the inhabitants had for some time been subsiding solely on mealie meal and fruit.

On the morning after our arrival the regiment shifted camp to a vacant space on the south side of the town opposite the school. Tents being at a premium, numerous small biveys or shelters, made by stretching a blanket or strip of canvas across a bridle rein attached to two rifles, were quickly erected by the men. These, though detracting from the military appearance of the camp, served as an efficient protection from the heat of the sun by day, and from the heavy dews at night. The school was placed at the disposal of the regiment to be used as a shelter in case of wet weather, and for other purposes, such as letter-writing and reading.

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Altogether we were comfortably placed in our new camp. A church parade was held in the town on Sunday, the 18th, and was attended by the majority of the troops off duty. Apart from the service these parades were always worth attending, if only to see the splendid marching and drilling of the various infantry regiments when on parade. While the column was halted at Rustenberg, I had the privilege of witnessing one such parade; and it left a lasting impression on my memory. It was attended by some four thousand troops, comprising such famous regiments as the Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders, Scots Greys, Royal Horse Artillery, and the Black Watch, all belonging to the various columns then in the vicinity. As regiment after regiment swung silently on the parade ground, each marching as one man, and lined up in the form of a square, shoulder to shoulder with the Colonials, it needed not the presence of a military band to make the blood tingle in one's veins, or to cause the lump of enthusiasm to rise in one's throat. As I stood on parade that Sunday morning, surrounded by the bronzed and war-stained soldiers that had taken part in the heavy fighting at Modder River, Magersfontein, and at the relief of Ladysmith, it seemed impossible to realise that one was really in the presence of officers and men whose fame and valour we had read of, but a few short months previously, when we were some thousands of miles away in New Zealand; and one felt that the hardships we had undergone were as nothing compared with the honour of being privileged to fight, side by side, with such men.

A and D Squadrons of the regiment left camp at 3.15 a.m., and took up outpost duties on the kopjes lying north and south of the town. The surroundnig country, as viewed from our elevated position on outpost, was mostly open and barren, and was dotted for miles with white piles of stones that marked the boundaries of the numerous claims that had been pegged off before the war. Away in the distance on our left could be seen the racecourse with its grand stand and other buildings. Beyond this again was the mining town-

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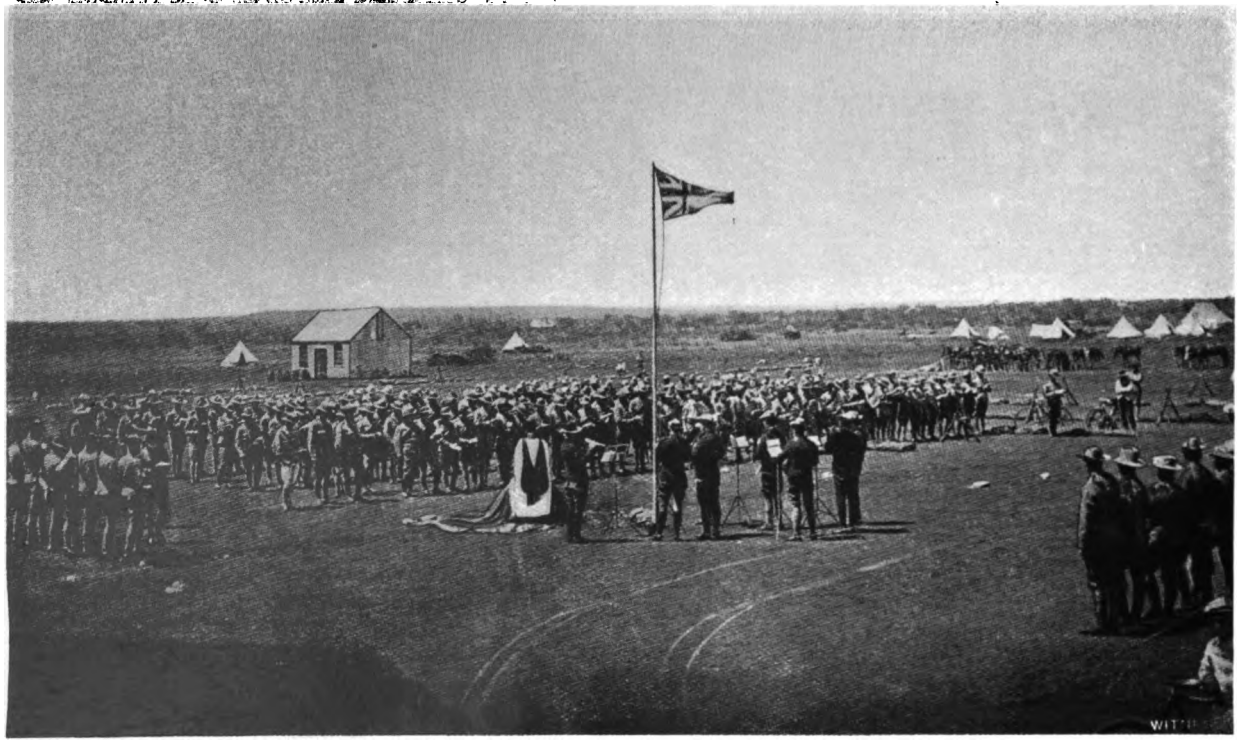

B.S.A. POLICE AND NEW ZEALANDERS ATTENDING CHURCH PARADE AT HUSSAR CAMP, BULAWAYO.

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ship of Buffelsdoorn, where Barney Barnado was said to have lost a quarter of a million of money. On our right we could trace the road to Potchefstroom for miles, as it wound its way past low ridges of kopjes plentifully sprinkled with quartz batteries and mining shafts. Behind us, some two miles away, was the town which, with its church spires, large buildings, houses, and shops, looked out of place in the wild setting of yellow veldt. Truly a native village with its numerous huts would have been more in keeping with the surroundings.

At a column sports' meeting, held in the recreation ground on the 22nd, the members of the Fourth made a name for themselves by winning ten out of the twelve events on the programme, and appropriating £38 of the £45 given as prize-money. The most interesting event of the day was the tug-of-war, which was competed for by teams from the Royal Artillery, Fifth New Zealanders, Sixth I.B., Fifth Fusiliers, and Fourth New Zealanders. After disposing of the opposition in the first round, the Australians and Fourth New Zealanders met in the final, when, after an exciting pull, the latter won, and thus avenged the defeat they had sustained at the hands of the Australians some time previously at Barberspan. The Fourth added still further to its laurels on the 23rd by defeating the Australians in a cricket match by eight runs. On the strength of this win, our Commanding Officer (Major Davies), who was an enthusiastic cricketer, presented the regiment with a set of cricket material. A cricket team was then raised by the Fourth, the writer being elected captain of it; and altogether four matches were played and won. Two of these were against the Australians, one was against the Fifth New Zealanders, and one against the Garrison Artillery.

During the next few days nothing of interest, with the exception of an occasional trip down to the Vaal for the purpose of laying or repairing a telegraph line that connected a garrison on that river with Klerksdorp, ocurred to break the daily routine of camp work. The Field-marshal General

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having decided that a permanent garrison was to remain in Klerksdorp until the termination of the war, the strengthening of the defences round the town was proceeded with. Barbed wire entanglements were erected, trenches dug, and earthworks thrown up. Railway communication with Potchefstroom was to be restored as soon as possible to enable a quicker transport to be established between the two towns. This railway line had been destroyed by the Boers earlier in the war; and we had been, since our arrival, relying on bullock convoys for the conveyance of our supplies from Potchefstroom. The Fifth New Zealanders and two infantry regiments were detailed to act as part of the garrison, when the column moved out.

On the 27th the column paraded about nine hundred strong, including six hundred mounted men. two squadrons of infantry, and some artillery, and they left camp for the purpose of clearing the country lying to the south and to the east of Potchefstroom. The Fourth paraded the following strength:—

	Officers.	Men.	Horses.
Staff	6 ...	8 ...	19
A squadron	3 .	72 ...	77
B squadron	3 ..	72 ...	74
C squadron . ..	3 ...	69 ...	76
D squadron	4 ..	68 ...	79
Totals ...	19	289	325

When a column is engaged in clearing the country, its object is to commandeer all stock and foodstuffs found on farms belonging to the enemy, and to destroy any waggons, farming implements, and forage that could not be taken away. All women and children found in occupation are also taken along with the column, and put into laager in the nearest garrisoned town. Up till this time our column had done a fair amount of commandeering, but it was as nothing compared with what we did during this trek of ten days through the Potchefstroom District. This portion of

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the country had not previously been visited by a British column, so that we found poultry, pigs, vegetables, fruit, and farm produce, very plentiful; and it can readily be imagined how well we soldiers fared. It was no uncommon sight to see the mounted men riding into camp, their saddles laden with the good things secured from the farmhouses on the line of march. This was indeed a time of peace and plenty. I say peace because our operations were not, to any extent, disturbed by the enemy. Bully beef and biscuits no longer formed our meals when such an appetising menu as boiled fowl, roast pork, potatoes, flap-jacks, and even an occasional goose or turkey, could be obtained without difficulty.

Our first camp after leaving Klerksdorp was at Koekemer, a spruit some ten miles along the Pocthefstroom road; and from there we marched south to the Vaal River and along its north bank to Tigersfontein, a distance of fourteen miles, clearing the country as we went. The column called a halt at the latter place for two days, during which the mounted men scoured the surrounding country within a radius of twelve miles. Another trek of fourteen miles took us to Reitfontein; and from there we proceeded to Lindique, and then on to Eigerswartzfontein, where we halted for two days. Eigerswartzfontein was left on the 4th, and we commenced our return journey to Klerksdorp via Potchefstroom. During the trek the column traversed some of the finest country we had yet seen. The open veldt was left behind at Tigersfontein, and we entered more hilly country, passing through valleys of extreme beauty, where there were numerous old-fashioned farmhouses built in the midst of acres and acres of orchards and vineyards. Large mobs of cattle, horses, and sheep were found daily in the dongas and secluded portions of the neighbouring kopjes, where they had been driven from the various farms, presumably for safety, by the women-folk or niggers, who had sought to keep them out of the hands of the hated "rooineks." The mounted men knew their work too well, however; and every nook and

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hollow that might shelter a few head was thoroughly searched, and I don't think that many were missed in the several miles covered by the troops.

We reached Potchefstroom, a long straggling Dutch town with shops and dwellings in sad disrepair, and a stench that savoured of enteric, on the 6th of December. Potchefstroom stood on the banks of the beautiful Mooi River that flowed in branches through its streets, which were planted with trees. The town was laid out in long thoroughfares, which crossed each other at right angles. Every house was surounded by trees; and the site was four thousand feet above sea-level. There were also several schools, churches, and hotels.

The women and children, numbering 930, whom we had collected from the various farms, were left in laager at Potchefstroom, and the proceeds of our commandeering efforts, which were as follows:—

8	prisoners of war
62	men
345	horses
28	mules
5,668	cattle
14,384	sheep
133	waggons
108	cape carts

were handed over to the G.O. commanding the garrison, to be sent down country by rail. The following are extracts, from Regimental Orders, regarding the trek:—"The Major-general desires to thank the brigade for their untiring zeal in carrying out the above trek." The following telegram to Major-general Douglas from chief staff officer in Johannesburg:—"Referring to your report on march in Potchefstroom district, General French is bringing it to the special notice of Chief, and especially the very excellent work done by Bushmen and New Zealanders."

Our march to headquarters in Klerksdorp was resumed at 3.45 a.m. on the 8th; and after a trek of two days we

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reached the latter place at 11 a.m. on the 9th. During our absence the railway line connecting with Potchefstroom had been restored; and the various defences about the town had been considerably strengthened by the garrison.

Nothing of interest happened to break the monotony of camp life till Tuesday, the 15th. On the morning of that day the train for Johannesburg left Klerksdorp as usual at 7 a.m. Half an hour afterwards, while having breakfast, we heard the boom of big guns to the east of the town; and we concluded that the train was getting a bad time. A few minutes later the voice of the adjutant rang out: "Fourth New Zealanders, stand to your horses!" The men quickly jumped to their feet, saddles and bridles were hurriedly thrown on the horses, and bandoliers and rifles quickly snatched up. "Mount! Advance by fours from the right of squadrons! Fours, right! Walk! March! Trot!" And the four squadrons of the Fourth New Zealand Regiment were in full swing down the road, within ten minutes of the first warning. We were the first to arrive at the rendezvous—half a mile out—where General Douglas and staff were waiting. Presently the rest of the brigade came up; and we started. The advance guard opened out at a gallop, and extended like a screen across the open country. We had proceeded about three miles when we caught sight of a large number of the enemy making for a group of rough-wooded kopjes, two miles away on our left front. We pushed on until we came into touch with their rear guard, who opened a heavy fire on us, wounding rather severely Baker, of C Squadron. At length we came out on a low ridge overlooking an open valley, scattered over which the enemy, numbering four or five hundred, and accompanied by a nine-pounder and two pom-poms, could be seen. What a sight it was! Oh, for the guns! What a scatter a few shells would make! It was no use wishing for the guns, however, as we had left them two miles in the rear; and before they came up the Boers had disappeared in the rough line of kopjes on the opposite

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side of the valley. When the main body arrived on the scene, A Squadron of the Fourth was ordered to push on across the valley, and to take up a position on the kopjes to the left of the place where the enemy had disappeared. This proved rather a ticklish business, as the Boers opened a heavy rifle fire on us from the right as we neared the kopjes, and succeeded in wounding several of our horses before we gained shelter. They then opened fire, with their nine-pounder and pom-poms, on the kopjes we had just left; and we could see their shells bursting among our troops as they appeared through the trees. Our guns soon spoke back; and an artillery duel went on across the valley for about an hour.

In the meantime our little squadron was experiencing a lively time. A number of the enemy located our position and kept up a constant rifle fire. Things were beginning to look serious for us, when we were reinforced by two other squadrons of the Fourth and a squadron of Bushmen. We then rejoined our main body and returned to Klerksdorp.

On the way back we learnt that the Boers had attempted to wreck the train by removing the fish plates of one of the rails. The engine managed to keep the rails; but three trucks filled with sheep were overturned. On these the enemy fired several shells, and had succeeded in killing a few sheep, when we arrived on the scene. The following regarding the day's work was taken from Regimental Orders:—"The regiment turned out very smartly this morning. Although it was the last to receive the order, it was the first to reach the ground."

The following day (Wednesday) a small patrol party from the regiment, under Lieut. Ross, were chased into camp by a number of the enemy that were in occupation of the buildings on the racecourse. They had evidently got into position there during the night for the purpose of surprising the patrol that was sent out daily to reconnoitre that part of the country. Late that night A Squadron of the regiment

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received orders to be ready to move out early in the morning, and to work round the outside of a belt of bush about five miles out, the object being to make a drive towards the racecourse.

Next morning we paraded at half-past 2. It was pitch dark as we picked our way out of camp, among tents, horse lines, mule waggons, sleeping niggers, and refuse pits, across the flat towards the drift. It was still dark as we passed the outpost on Cavalry Kopje, and rode on to the vedlt. We extended and worked round the bush, changing direction to the right all the time; but there was nothing in it. The Boers were not to be had that way. They were somewhere else that morning; and we returned to camp without having fired a shot.

On Friday the regiment formed part of an escort to a convoy of one hundred and forty waggons, going down to Coal Drift, on the Vaal River, which was held by a small garrison of Somersets and Fifth New Zealanders. We started at 3 o'clock in the morning, and arrived at the drift ten hours later. The convoy was for Bruce Hamilton's column which was camped across the river. After seeing some of the waggons safely across the swollen drift, we were preparing to boil our canteens when the order was received for us to parade and move out to an outlying farm on a commandeering expedition. Three empty mule waggons and a gun accompanied us. The advance trotted out past the farm, over the undulating veldt—but no enemy in sight. The leading troop, sixteen strong, cantered up a gentle slope, and were promptly fired on by about thirty Boers at three hundred yards range. They dismounted and returned the fire, and pushed on when re-inforced by two troops; and the enemy retired to an ugly-looking kopje in the background. A shell from our gun drove them from this position, however, and the work of commandeering went on without further interruption. We returned to camp at the drift a

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little after 6, and picketed our horses, after which we had a drink of tea, and rolled ourselves up in our blankets for the night.

Next day (Saturday) we returned to Klerksdorp about 1.30 p.m., having with us waggons, women, children, and stock, taken over from General Hamilton's column. On Sunday we had a spell in camp, but on Monday the outpost and reconnoitring duties were taken up by the regiment.

When leaving New Zealand with the Fourth in March there were very few of us that expected to spend Christmas and New Year in South Africa. But there we were, sure enough, with the prospect of more fighting in the future than we had had since we took the field, for it was known that about one thousand five hundred Boers, with one Armstrong and one pom-pom, under Commandant Bergers, were in the vicinity of the kopjes lying between Klerksdorp and Ventersdorp; and we would sooner or later come into contact with them.

Christmas morning found the majority of our regiment in camp at Klerksdorp, B Squadron only having been on outpost all night till 10 o'clock in the forenoon. We were wakened at daylight by a band of Kaffir boys and girls that passed through our lines singing Christmas carols. Lying awake in our tents listening to the familiar tunes as the choir passed by, I think that the majority of us were, in thought at least, back in New Zealand, dwelling on remembrances of former Christmas days spent at home among those we held dear; and one fell to wondering how many of us would be spared to see another such day.

The day passed quietly, so quietly in fact that, but for the memories left by the carol singers, one could hardly imagine it was Christmas. Morning services were held in the various churches, and were attended, as a matter of course, by the members of the regiment. We returned from parade in time to prepare our Christmas dinners, which, how-

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ever, were not sumptuous. An extra ration of bacon and grain had been sanctioned, and a pint of beer, the product of a Potchefstroom brewery, was served out to each man. With these exceptions we had to content ourselves with the usual fare.

The Boers, too, must have been celebrating the day of peace and good will, for none of them were seen by our outposts or by our patrols. So we were left in undisturbed repose to seek what shelter we could from the sweltering heat, for the day was one of the hottest we had had in South Africa.

In the afternoon a cricket match was played between a team from the Colonial regiments and one from the British regiments then in camp, and it resulted in the defeat of the latter by forty-one runs on the first innings. The following are the names of the players, and their scores:—

1st Innings.—ENGLISHMEN.

Capt. M'Naughton, 121, c Pyrie, b D. Bowie	4
Capt. Puerera, 114231431321311314111121 32, b Quintall	51
Lieut. Flint, 11421441311431, b Quintall	31
Major Wells (Capt.), lbw Quintall	0
Lieut. Jameson, b Quintall	0
Lieut. Richards, 1114, b Moore	7
Lieut. Lloyd, 113, c Quintall, b Moore	5
Lieut. Bolly, b Quintall	0
Capt. Colly, 1212, c Doyle, b Moore	6
Corp. Harrison, c Bowie, b Moore	0
Private Elphich, not out	0
Byes, 11	2
Total	106

—Bowling Analysis.—

	wkts.	runs.
Trooper Bowie ..	1	22
Lieut. Pyrie ...	[illegible]	19
Lieut. Doyle ...	0	22
Corpl. Quintall .	[illegible]	32
Trooper Moore ..	4	9

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1st Innings.—COLONIALS.

Lieut. Pyrie (6th I.B. Scouts), 1, b Colly	1
Sergt. Harden (6th I.B.), 3311121111, b Harrison	15
Corp. D. Hewitt (4th N.Z.R.R.), 2, b Harrison	2
Corp. Quintall (6th I.B.), 13211321114213212, b M'Naughton ...	31
Lieut. Sanderson (5th N.Z.), 11111113131, b Puerera	15
Surgeon-Capt. Neil 4th N.Z.R.R.), 111113421, b M'Naughton ...	15
Trooper D. Bowie (4th N.Z.R.R.), 111121312111, run out ...	16
Sergt. Wearne (6th I.B.), 34, c M'Naughton, b Harrison ...	7
Lieut. Doyle (6th I.B. Scouts), run out	0
Trooper J. G. Moore (4th N.Z.R.R.), 12444422111, c Bolly, b Harrison	26
Lt.-Col. Davies (Capt.) (O.C. 4th N.Z.R.R.), 113, not out ...	5
Byes, 1114322	14
Total	147

When at tea that evening we heard that Major-general Douglas, who had commanded our column since we moved out from Ottoshoop, was leaving, on the way to England, by train the following morning. An unofficial send-off was arranged, when all officers and men off duty were to meet at the station and give him a cheer as the train moved out. These plans were all upset, however, when we received our orders at 11 o'clock. These were to the effect that the column, under command of Colonel Kekewich, the hero of Kimberley, would move out of Klerksdorp before dawn, with six days' provisions; but our destination was kept secret from all ranks.

Lieut. R. Seddon rejoined our regiment, and was attached to B Squadron. The following is from Regimental Orders of 20th of December:—"No. 1371, Private Oscar Bottom, of Fourth N.Z. Regiment, who was severely wounded at Buffelshoek on 16th of August, died in No. 11 General Hospital, Kimberley, on 11th of November."

The 27th, at 3.30 a.m., saw the column under weigh, trekking silently across the broad open veldt, in a north-westerly direction. For the first two hours our march was unopposed; but as we approached a low range of kopjes the

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advance guard—furnished by D Squadron—came under a hot fire, but galloped in and occupied the position, driving the Boers to a ridge behind. There the main strength of the enemy seemed to be posted. Our men opened a heavy fire on them. B Squadron quickly advanced to the support, receiving a sharp, flanking fire as they galloped over the plain and took up a position on the left of their comrades. Fortunately, no one was hit; but the horse ridden by Trooper Best was shot through the hock. A Squadron was detailed to the right and C to left, to attack the enemy on both flanks. While this movement was being carried out, Sergeant-major Jolly, of A Squadron, was shot through the leg, the same bullet killing his horse; and Private C. Brown, of C Squadron, was dangerously wounded in the groin.

This flanking movement caused the enemy to retire; but they disputed every foot of the ground. When our main body was advancing on the last position they attempted to hold, they opened on us with a pom-pom, and dropped a few well-directed shells among us, without, however, doing any harm. Beyond this position was a broad plain, across which they retreated in disorder. They were closely pursued for a considerable distance by the Sixth I.B.; but they had got too big a start, and the Australians were recalled. In this chase Lieut. Miller and two other Bushmen were severely wounded. While we were resting our horses a body of about fifty Boers attacked our convoy, which was moving parallel to us on the veldt about four miles away, but received such a heavy fire from the infantry escort and from two howitzers that they quickly retired out of range.

On our arrival in camp at Platberg shortly after 3 p.m., the enemy again proved troublesome in endeavouring to prevent the Australians from taking up the outpost positions. After a considerable amount of sniping, the positions were taken with the loss of two horses.

Throughout the whole of the day the Boers had fought with great determination, quite in contrast to those

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we had previously encountered farther north. The casualties of our regiment were two men wounded and three horses killed.

During the day's fighting a plucky action was performed by Private J. G. Brown, of A Squadron. While this squadron was galloping across the open veldt, under a heavy flank and front fire, to take up a position on a kopje occupied by the enemy, the horse ridden by Wm. Brown stumbled, threw its rider, and then galloped off. On noticing the accident and realising the danger his brother ran of being shot down while dismounted, Brown secured the horse and rode back to him, both of them gaining the shelter of the kopje. Brown was subsequently mentioned in despatches for his plucky action.

The following day (Thursday) we continued our march in a northerly direction, and after a trek of about fourteen miles, camped at Bulkop a little after noon. Very little opposition was encountered until nearing our camping ground, when the enemy, who held some very strong positions on our right, opened fire on A Squadron, which was operating on that flank. B Squadron galloped to our support, but it was not until our two pom-poms and Maxim came into action that the Boers were forced to retire. In the afternoon a troop of A Squadron, under Lieut. Keddell, went out to gain touch with General Babington's column, which was supposed to be some eight miles away to the left. On the way we were fortunate enough to capture a Boer despatch-rider, bearing some important despatches to Commandant Bergers. We returned to camp at midnight, having carried out successfully our somewhat dangerous work. Orders of that evening warned us that other British columns were operating in the neighbourhood; and instruction had been issued to them to raise their hats on rifles as a sign of recognition.

We resumed our march on Friday at 3.45 o'clock, and had a very quiet trek to Ventersdorp, which was reached at

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11 a.m. Three other columns, under Generals French, Babington, and Broadwood, approached the town simultaneously with ours. It was only then that we learnt that we had been co-operating in a scheme to surround some two thousand of the enemy that had been occupying the town for some time. The latter had, however, evacuated the town the previous evening.

The following farwell order by General Douglas, A.D.C. to the Queen, was given out:—"It has been my good fortune to have in my command a brigade of Imperial Bushmen and New Zealanders who, actuated by a high spirit of patriotism, have proved themselves worthy of the best tradition of the British Army. The work they have done in the field, and their intelligence in scouting and manœuvre, have much excelled my expectations. By their cheerful endurance in inclement weather and in heat, by their devotion to their duties, and by their willingness to meet my wishes, they have made my command an easy and a very pleasant one."

It having been decided to garrison Ventersdorp, the work of constructing trenches, bomb-proof shelters, and gun-pits, and of erecting barbed-wire entanglements, kept all hands busy for the next few days. Brigadier-general Hamilton was appointed to the command of the permanent garrison in the town.

On the 29th General French's column moved out at 4 a.m., and marched eastwards. On January 1st (New Years' Day), A and B Squadrons of the regiment stood to arms at 2.30 a.m., and acted as inlying picquet during the day, the rest of the men being hard at work on the defences. General Babington's column left Ventersdorp at 7 a.m. on the 2nd, trekking in a north-easterly direction. At 4 o'clock that afternoon our column struck camp, and, following the same route, camped some three miles out. That night it rained heavily; and the outpost supplied by A Squadron suffered accordingly.

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Our march was resumed next day; and after a ten-mile trek we reached Klip Pan, where we camped. We had a long dreary trek of twenty miles on the 4th. Rain fell all day, drenching us to the skin, and making the roads heavy for the bullocks, and our progress correspondingly slow. A halt was made at 1 o'clock; and a ration of rum was issued to the troops. After an hour's spell we started again, and joined General Babington's column in camp at Reitfontein shortly after 5 p.m. Regimental Orders that evening contained the information that the two columns were to amalgamate, and be known, for the future, as the Southern column, under command of General Babington, and that we would move off at 4.15 the following morning, no fires to be lighted. Something was in the wind, but what we did not know, and, being tired and sleepy after our long day's work, cared less.

Half-past 4 next morning saw the mounted men, with the guns and light transport, on the move, the second line of transport under an escort of infantry being left to follow at daylight. When well clear of camp our regiment cantered out, and took up the advance guard of the column along with the Australians, the latter being on the left, and the Fourth on the right, of the road. Our orders were to work in sections, with a distance of about four hundred yards between each section, and five yards between the files, thus covering a front of some three miles.

The morning was cold, and a heavy mist hung like a pall over everything, making it difficult for the various sections of the advance to keep in touch with one another. We had proceeded some two miles across the veldt when heavy firing on our left forced us to the conclusion that the Australians had engaged with the enemy. A halt was at once called, and sending back our horses, we occupied the best available positions, and awaited developments. The firing lasted fully ten minutes, during which the Australians were subjected to the attentions of a fifteen-pounder, which landed several shells among them, and then ceased abruptly.

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Shortly afterwards we learnt that we had run into the rear guard of a British column, under General Gordon, that was marching at right angles to our own. Our column should have been working parallel with Gordon's; but the prevailing fog had caused our Dutch guides to lose their direction. Hence the mistake. Fortunately no casualties resulted from the encounter, and our march was continued. We then changed front to the left; and the two columns proceeded over the veldt towards a long ridge of rough kopjes. This change of front brought the I.L.H., who had been on the left, into the advance. The Bushmen acted as flankers, and our regiment dropped back and occupied the adjacent kopjes as rear guard to the column. The mist had now lifted; and the sun shone down in all its glory, casting a golden radiance over everything. The two columns moved slowly along side by side, looking for all the world like huge serpents as they wound in and out of the various dips and deviations of the veldt, Gordon's column gradually working away to the right.

We watched our advance guard as they rode slowly on to a long low ridge, and then lost sight of them as they disappeared into the valley beyond. So far not a shot had been fired; and we were wondering whether, after all, the enemy were in possession of the kopjes in front, when the faint ping-pong of a Mauser was borne upon our ears. This was immediately followed by a running, ripping, far-away, crashing rifle fire, and we knew that the advance guard were getting it "hot." The column halted; and we could see squadrons of mounted men galloping out to the left and to the front in support. The guns also moved out at a gallop, and took up various positions; and their shells were soon dropping on to a long rough ridge in front, which was evidently occupied by a strong force of the enemy.

Meanwhile General Gordon's column had come into contact with the Boers, and the roar of his big guns, mingled with ours and those of the enemy, the heavy rifle fire, and

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the bursting of shells, created an awful din. The engagement lasted for several hours, and was the biggest our column had indulged in up to that time, and gave us an idea of what heavy firing really was. The enemy stubbornly contested every inch of the ground, but were eventually driven over the kopjes into the huge valley, which stretched away to the Magaliesberg Mountains beyond.

The two columns then bivouacked on the scene of the day's fighting. The casualties on both sides were rather heavy. Our losses were three officers and ten men killed, and twenty-two men wounded. These were all attached to one squadron of the Imperial Light Horse, who had fallen into a trap set by the wily Boer, and who were acting as part of the advance guard to the column. This squadron had proceeded in close order up a grassy slope, which stretched away to the rough kopjes in the background, quite unconscious of the fact that the whole of the innocent-looking ridge in front was lined with Boers, who, arranged in the form of a horse shoe, were lying concealed in the long grass. When near the top the squadron received the order to dismount; and the men were in the act of handing over their horses to the number threes, when the enemy opened a terrific rifle fire that mowed them down in all directions. The Boers had then come forth from their concealment, and after going through the clothing of the dead, the dying, and the wounded men, and securing the saddles from the dead horses lying scattered about, they mounted their ponies, which were tethered behind the ridge, and rode off before our supports moved up. During the night six more of the wounded men died, bringing the total of those killed to nineteen.

As our regiment rode out of camp at daylight the next morning to take up the advance guard to the column, which was returning to Ventersdorp, we passed a party of the I.L.H. that were engaged burying their dead. They had been working all night, by the aid of slush lights, digging a long narrow trench in which to place the bodies of their

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comrades, before the column moved off. Hardened and selfish though we had become through almost daily contact with such scenes, we instinctively raised our hats as we rode past those silent, still forms, lying side by side in one common grave. For them the last order had come. They had moved out on that final trek from which there was no returning.

And far and wide,
They have done and died,
  By donga, and veldt, and kloof;
And the lonely grave
Of the honoured brave
  Is a proof—if we need a proof.

—E. WALLACE.

After a three day's trek the column reached Ventersdorp at noon on the 9th, and went into camp on a rise overlooking the township. The little garrison in Ventersdorp had been kept busy in our absence by roving bands of the enemy that had worried the patrols and the outposts not a little. The telegraph line connecting with Potchefstroom had been cut by one of these bands; and during the afternoon A and B Squadrons of our regiment escorted a party of Royal Engineers out to repair it.

The Regimental Orders of the next day were made interesting from the fact that they contained the following copies of cablegrams:—

From Swan, Mayor of Dunedin, to Lord Kitchener—"Kindly convey our heartfelt Christmas gretings to New Zealand's representatives in South Africa."

From Seddon, Premier, to Colonel Davies—"Lord Kitchener suggests Secretary of State that N.Z. officers and men now in South Africa be detained. Send draft from this colony fill ranks—pleased, have additional assistance—pay high tribute to our Contingents for signal service rendered—Government intimated State—colony will cheerfully meet wishes of Imperial Government and Lord Kitchener. Convey officers and men best thanks of colony for noble services ren-

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dered Queen and Empire in cause of freedom and justice - impress them strengethening Kitchener's hands, shorten war, making good advantage—cost best blood efforts Colony, Nation—Wish all merry Christmas—Happy New Year—Success new century."

From Seddon, Premier, to Lord Kitchener, Chief in Command—"New Zealand agrees Contingents remain—Will fill ranks and render further assistance—Wish you to notify officers and men—also to convey best thanks people of New Zealand for valuable service Queen and Empire, and our heartiest greetings—enjoyable Christmas—bright New Year—Good luck coming century."

From Seddon, Premier, to Lord Kitchener, Chief in Command—"Colleagues and self wish you enjoyable Christmas—Happy New Year, and every success in difficult problem you have to solve. We will do our best to help you."

From Lord Kitchener to Seddon, Premier—"Many thanks for good wishes—Will convey your message to officers and men—New Zealanders are of greatest assistance."

The following message from Her Majesty the Queen was received by Lord Kitchener—"Her Majesty commands the Adjutant-general to convey to the Militia, Yeomanry, Volunteers, and Colonial Forces, who have served during the past year in South Africa, her grateful appreciation of their signal services—My heartfelt good wishes to you and all ranks under your command for Christmas and New Year."

Regimental Orders of the same date stated that Colonel Grey would assume command of the mounted men attached to the amalgamated column.

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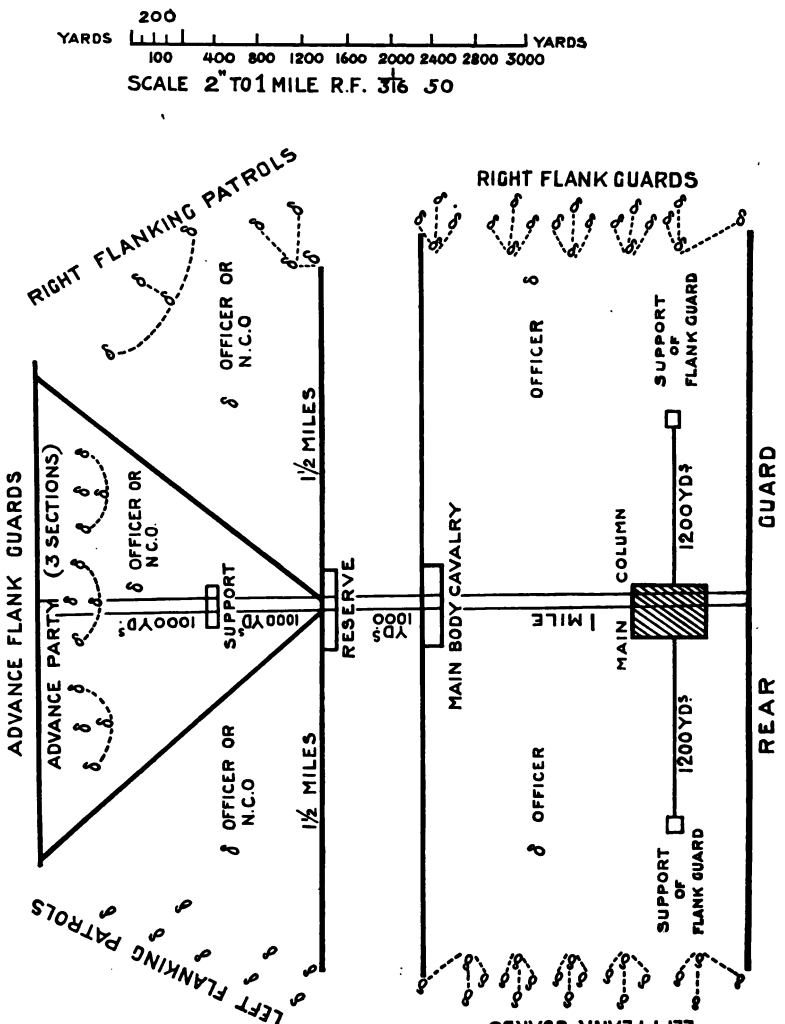
GENERAL DOUGLASS' PLAN OF ADVANCE.

This plan of advance was found to be too complicated to put into practice, and was discarded in favour of General French's more simplified form of advance.



(1) Strength of various bodies of 1 squadron forming adv. guard.

Advance party and flank patrols ¼.

Support ¼.

Reserve ½.

(2) Officers, or N.C.O., will be specially detch'd to command adv. party, and right and left flanking patrols.

(3) Distances and intervals depend upon nature of country and proximity of enemy.

(4) All ridges and kopjes within 3,000 yards of road should be turned.

(5) When column halts, adv. guard forms temporary outposts.

(6) Officer com'd'g adv. guard accompanies reserve.

(7) If any position of advance guard is checked by enemy, scouts hold their ground, if possible, till supported.

(8) When enemy is in rear, the distribution and action of rear guard is same as that of advance guard.

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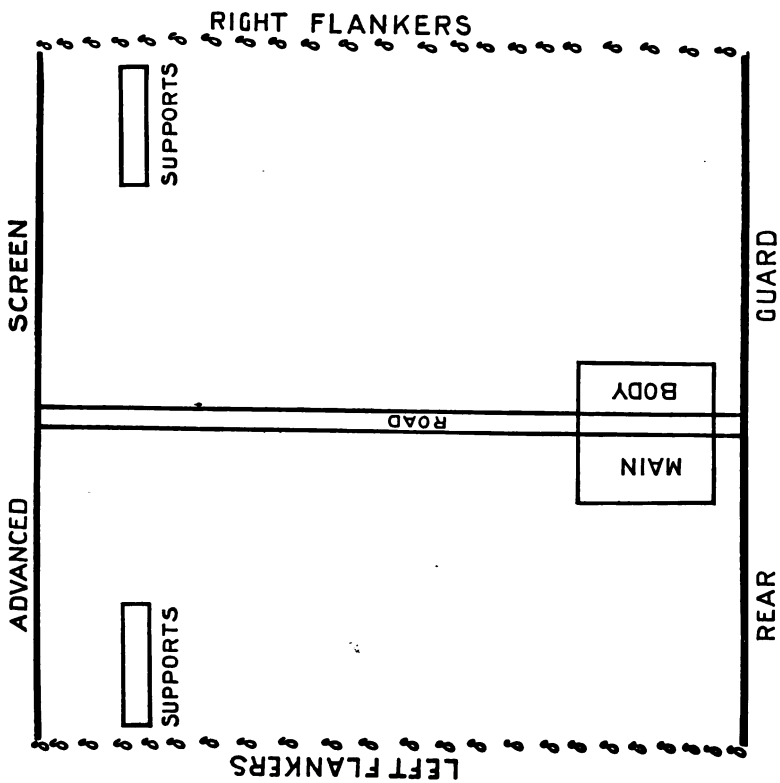
GENERAL FRENCH'S SIMPLE PLAN OF ADVANCE.



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CHAPTER XII.

VENTERSDORP AND SURROUNDINGS—HOW HARDHAM WON THE V.C.

For about nine miles to the south of Ventersdorp the banks of the spruit were occupied by a long succession of farms. Along those nine miles of river bank were also numerous cottages, barns, and stables. On the 12th the column, taking three days' rations, left to clear up this valley. We had gone some distance across the open veldt without seeing a sign of the enemy, and were beginning to think that the trek was going to be uneventful, when a rider was seen to leave a rough, isolated kopje on our right front and gallop into a belt of trees growing in a hollow on the right. Shortly afterwards about twenty men rode out from the hollow, and took up a position on the kopje with the evident intention of barring our further progress. Rifles were at once unslung; and we instinctively opened further out as we approached the kopje. The Boers let us ride to within fifteen hundred yards, and then opened fire; and their bullets began to land all around us. We dismounted at the edge of a mealie patch, and, sending our horses back out of range, returned their fire. During this exchange of shots Lieut. Keddell was severely wounded by a Martini bullet that passed through his left arm, breaking the bone close to the shoulder. In the meantime a number of the enemy occupied a long rocky ridge, and opened a heavy fire on the Australians that were on the right flank. While we were thus held in check, the main body of the Boers with two waggons left the hollow and trekked away across the veldt.

Our guns then came up, too late as usual, and commenced to shell the kopje held by the Boers in front. But this did not seem to have any effect; and it was not until

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No. 1 Troop of A Squadron, under Lieut. Jickell, pluckily charged the kopje on horseback with fixed bayonets, that the enemy vacated it. As the latter rode off to pick up their main body, the right wing of the advance guard did some good shooting, bringing down two of the riders as they galloped off. The march was then resumed; and we went into bivouac at Klippard's Drift, nine miles from Ventersdorp.

The Regimental Orders of the 12th said: "The Commanding Officer desires to express his great satisfaction at the manner in which A Squadron, led by its squadron commander, advanced on a kopje this afternoon under a heavy fire."

It being known that from eight hundred to one thousand Boers were in the vicinity of Klippard's Drift, the whole regiment were placed on outpost duty for the night, the troops being dotted along the hills around the camp We had no blankets; but most of us had a fair sleep in our overcoats, with our heads resting on our helmets for pillows.

All the next day we were busily engaged commandeering and burning, and columns of smoke and flame arose along the valley, as we slowly worked our way back to Ventersdorp. The column remained halted there for the next few days, awaiting orders from headquarters. A convoy arrived from Potchefstroom on the 16th, bringing with it a large colonial mail.

At daylight the following morning the mounted men, with a pom-pom, moved out of camp for the purpose of stirring up the enemy, who were known to be in force in the rough hilly country towards the west of Ventersdorp. We had ridden for about a mile across the open veldt, and were approaching a line of kopjes that fringed the broken country beyond, when our advance guard stumbled on a Boer outpost of three men. The latter fired a few shots, and then mounted their horses and galloped off to warn their main body of our approach.

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Leaving the veldt we moved cautiously forward over the broken ground, past rocky ridges, and past clumps of trees and likely-looking dongas. The Australians were in advance, I.L.H. on both flanks, and the Fourth acted as a reserve, marching in column of troops in the centre. We had covered about two miles in this formation without incident, when we descried a body of mounted men in the distance coming towards us at a gallop. They were evidently making for a low rough ridge lying between them and our advance guard. The latter were prevented from seeing the enemy, and rode along quite unconscious of their presence. Colonel Grey at once ordered A Squadron of our regiment to gallop out and re-inforce the Australians, and, if possible to occupy the ridge before the Boers arrived on the scene. Captain Bauchop gave the order: "A Squadron on the left; form squadron! Trot! Gallop!" and we opened out and raced for the kopje. The Boers had had too good a start; and, while we were still four hundred yards away, they were in occupation. As we rode up they opened a heavy rifle fire, causing us to deviate from our course and take cover, along with the Bushmen, in a hollow to the right. We dismounted, and the Australians, in skirmishing order, moved up the ridge to dislodge the Boers. With the help of our pom-pom they accomplished this, losing one man killed and two wounded. They, however, accounted for three of the enemy, as the latter retired to their horses on the opposite side of the ridge. We had stirred the Boers up with a vengeance; and squadrons of them could be seen taking up positions on our right and left fronts to bar our further progress. Colonel Grey then gave the order to return to Ventersdorp; and we retired in good order, arriving in camp without further mishap, shortly after 11 o'clock.

The mounted men, under command of Captain Sir Jas. Miller, Bart., left Ventersdorp at noon on the 20th, and proceeded towards Potchefstroom to meet a supply convoy that was expected from that place. All the regiments paraded their full strength, and were accompanied by three

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guns, as it was anticipated that an attack would be made on the convoy by the Boer commando that was reported to have crossed the railway line near Fredericstaadt the previous evening. As we moved along, a good lookout was kept on all sides; but the commando had evidently trekked in another direction, as not a Boer was seen. We came across the convoy outspanned for the night at Klippan, ten miles from camp. The mounted escort with it had taken up the outpost duties previous to our arrival, and we were not sorry. Our return to Ventersdorp the next morning was as devoid of interest as the trip out had been the previous day; and we arrived safely with our charge in time to partake of our midday meal.

A cablegram was received from Colonel Pole-Penton, commanding N.Z. forces, notifying that transfers from the regiment to South African Police could not be granted. An official announcement of the death of Her Majesty Queen Victoria was also received in camp on the 23rd, and the Commanding Officer ordered that all flags were to be flown at half mast until further orders.

The Fourth supplied the patrols that left camp before daylight on the 24th to reconnoitre the country to the west of the town. Previous visits to this locality had led us to expect a brush with the enemy's outposts, who were usually in occupation of commanding ground some little distance out. This morning, however, not a Boer was to be seen within miles; and we at once concluded that the commando, which had been in the neighbourhood for some time past, had moved further afield. That our conclusions were correct was proved, when, on reconnoitring a clump of trees situated in a well-sheltered donga, we found the remains of the deserted Boer laager. Judging by the traces of numerous rudely-constructed biveys, and small fires, some of which were still warm, it was apparent that a fairly large body of the enemy had been encamped in the donga the night before. We followed the tracks of the waggons for some distance in

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an easterly direction, and then returned to camp. There we found all was bustle. Tents were being struck, horses were being brought in and fed, and waggons were being loaded up. In our absence, orders to march had been received in camp; and the column was to move at 1 o'clock, towards the Magaliesbergs, to re-inforce General Cunningham, who, it was rumoured, was in a tight corner. Two o'clock saw the column, still commanded by Major-general Babington, once more in search of "Johnny, the Boer." The change from what had been practically garrison duty to the freer and more exciting life of trekking across the veldt was much appreciated by all ranks.

During our stay in Ventersdorp the strength of the regiment, which had been decreasing gradually since our arrival in South Africa, was weakened further by sickness and various other causes, so that when we left, we could only parade two hundred and five officers and men. The Australians, too, had suffered, and two squadrons of the 14th Hussars were attached to the column to complete the strength of the mounted troops.

The column arrived at Klippan shortly after dark, and went into bivouac for the night, A and B Squadrons taking up the outpost duties. An early start was made the following morning; and after a twelve-mile trek, we went into camp at Vlakfontein (a place that was destined to become notorious in the latter history of the war), where we were soon afterwards joined by General Clement's column, under command of General Cunningham. The latter had been hemmed in for two days at Oliphant's Nek by some fifteen hundred Boers; and it was only under cover of darkness the previous night that he had managed to extricate his command, after losing nine men killed and between thirty and forty wounded.

Both columns remained halted for the next two days, during which several exciting encounters took place between our mounted patrols and the Boers, who were in force in the

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neighbourhood. Our outposts, too, experienced a lively time, as the enemy kept up a continuous rifle fire on them from the adjacent hills, ceasing only when darkness set in.

Regimental Orders issued in camp contained the information that the regiment would in future—until further orders—be formed into two squadrons instead of four for all purposes of parade and work in the field. Each squadron was to consist of four troops—A and B combined to be known as A Squadron, under command of Captain Nicholson, with Captain Bauchop, Lieuts. Macdonald, Tubman, and Seddon as troop leaders; C and D combined to be known as C Squadron, with Captain Pringle in command, and Lieuts. Thompson, Elder, Arthur, and Squadron Sergeant-major Fraser as troop leaders. The original form of squadrons was to be observed for all purposes of interior economy when in camp.

The two columns left Vlakfontein together a 4.45 a.m. on the 28th, and trekked in opposite directions. Cunningham, taking with him the prisoners, the wounded men, and all the empty waggons, moved towards Krugersdorp, while we ascended, and proceeded along the ridge of hills that runs parallel to the Magaliesberg Mountains, to Cypherfontein, where it was understood we were to remain in garrison for some time.

Numbers of the enemy occupied the kopjes on our line of march, and indulged in a large amount of sniping at the advance and left flank guards, composed of the I.L.H. and of the 14th Hussars respectively, several of whom were wounded, and one, an Hussar, killed outright. The trek was characterised by an act of bravery performed by Farrier-sergeant Hardham of our regiment, an act for which he was afterwards awarded the Victoria Cross. The troop from C Squadron, to which Hardham was attached, had ridden out under Lieut. Arthur to support the Hussars, who were having rather a bad time on the left flank. As they approached to occupy a rough ridge of kopjes, a number of

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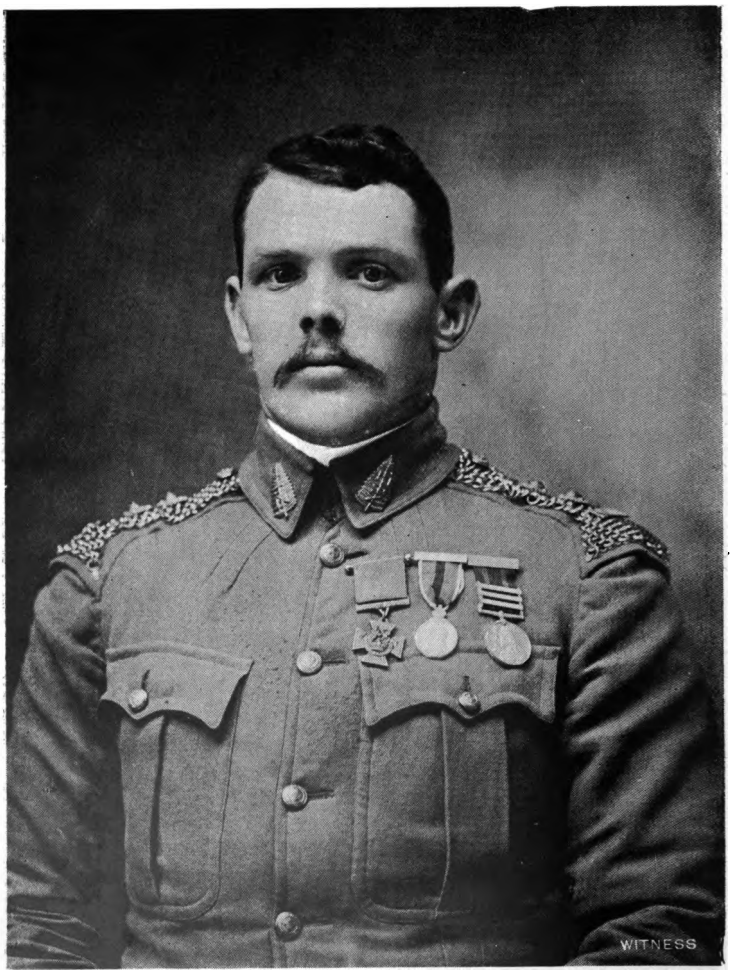

LIEUT. (FARRIER-MAJOR) W. J. HARDHAM, V.C.

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Boers, concealed among the rocks, opened a terrific rifle fire, causing them to beat a hasty retreat. During the retirement Private J. M'Rae was severely wounded, the same bullet killing his horse. On seeing his comrade fall, Sergeant Hardham at once galloped back, dismounted, and placing the wounded man on his own horse, took hold of the stirrup leather and ran alongside until out of danger. Private Alex. M'Phee was also wounded whilst retiring.

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CHAPTER XIII.

Round about Cypherfontein and Ventersdorp—Captain Bauchop's Plucky Action.

Cypherfontein, which was to be the headquarters of the column for the next few weeks was not—as might be supposed—a township, but merely the name given to the highest and most commanding portion of the line of kopjes along which we had advanced from Vlakfontein, and which stretched away for miles in the direction of Krugersdorp. Camp was pitched on the south side of the kopje under shelter of the ridge, and overlooked the open veldt across which our column and that of General Gordon had advanced against the Boers on January 5. The graves of the men belonging to the I.L.H. who had fallen on that occasion could be seen some distance away to the left; and from the ridge above we obtained a fine view of the Magaliesberg Range and the beautiful valley lying between.

Regimental Orders, issued on the evening of our arrival, outlined the routine to be observed during our stay at Cypherfontein; and it was at once recognised that we were going to have anything but an easy time. In addition to the ordinary duties attached to a permanent camp, fatigue parties were to be constantly employed erecting wire entanglements and digging trenches and gun pits in order to make our position, naturally a strong one, impregnable to any attack. The various outposts, inlying and outlying picquets, and patrols, were to be furnished daily in turn by the four mounted regiments attached to the column, and were arranged as under:—

1. No. 1 picquet on east kopje.—One officer, 20 mounted men, and 20 dismounted; total, 41. The latter were to return to camp at 5.30 a.m. Two cossack posts, under a strong patrol, were to remain in position from 5.30 a.m. till 6.30 p.m.

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2. No. 2 picquet in west gully.—One N.C.O. and 14 men. Mount at 5 a.m. and dismount at 6.30 p.m. Two cossack posts to be furnished from this picquet—one at the water post and one in front of the main picquet. The picquet to mount under a strong guard.

3. Five camp picquets, each of one N.C.O. and six men. To mount at 5.30 a.m. and dismount at 5.30 p.m.

4. Two camp picquets at east and west posts, three men each. To mount at 5.30 a.m. and dismount when relieved at 5.30 p.m.

5. Inlying picquet of one squadron.—Horses to be saddled up from 5.30 a.m. till 6.30 p.m. Men to sleep dressed, with arms ready.

6. Cattle guard.—One N.C.O and 16 mounted men.

7. Covering party.—20 men under one officer; to act daily as escort to wood-cutting party.

8. All posts to be visited at least twice by day and twice by night at uncertain hours, by an officer detailed by O.C. outpost.

9. Men on outpost duty, picquet, or guard, to keep their bayonets fixed from 5.30 p.m. to 5.30 a.m.

10. A grazing guard—20 men and one N.C.O.—to be detailed by regiment on duty to keep the transport animals within certain bounds. Mount at 7 a.m. and return to camp at 5.30 p.m.

The Fourth took up these duties the day after our arrival at Cypherfontein, A Squadron supplying the patrol, and C Squadron relieving the Hussars on outpost. The patrol left camp, under Captain Bauchop, at daylight, and descended into the valley to ascertain, if possible, the strength of the enemy. Numbers of Boers had retreated in this direction during our advance the day before, and as we moved cautiously over the rough ground, we fully expected to meet with a warm reception. The enemy had evidently made themselves scarce during the night, however, as only three or four were seen. These had a little sniping at us but caused no damage; and we returned safely to camp at 9.30, and formed the inlying picquet for the remainder of the day.

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A second visit, in which all the mounted men participated, was paid to the valley the next day for commandeering purposes. Colonel Grey was in command, and we had with us two pom-poms and several empty waggons. A Squadron, of the Fourth, and a squadron of Australians took up the advance, covering a front of about two miles as we moved across the veldt. We rode for some three miles without opposition, and then halted and took up positions on the best available ground, and waited while the work of destruction and commandeering was carried out by the rest of the troops. At the farms we had passed on the way out, numbers of waggons, a threshing mill and engine, and a large amount of forage were burnt, and quantities of poultry, fruit, vegetables and pigs secured. On the return journey about twenty Boers, one of whom was armed with an elephant gun, followed at a safe distance, and worried us in the rear guard, three of our horses being wounded before we reached camp.

The regiment's turn for duty came round again on 2nd of February, when C Squadron supplied the grazing guard, and A Squadron took over the main outpost on East Kopje. This kopje lay half a mile along the ridge from camp, and was of a very rough formation. Its top covered a considerable area, and was a mass of huge detached rocks and crevices, which made it an ideal outpost. Traces of recent fighting were everywhere apparent. Numbers of empty cartridge shells, including Mausers, Mannlichers, Lee-Metfords, Maxims, Lee-Enfields, and one or two exploded fifteen-pounders, littered the rocks, while several dead horses, in various stages of decay, were lying about in the hollows.

Taking up a position on the extreme edge of the kopje, under the shelter of a solitary tree, I made myself as comfortable as circumstances would permit, and with the aid of a powerful pair of field-glasses, surveyed the beautiful panorama spread out before me. Far below lay the valley, stretching for miles, its centre a maze of rough, broken

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ridges and kopjes, but tapering away at either end into a wide sweep of open veldt. Numerous old-fashioned farm-houses with white-washed walls and chimneys, and with thatched roofs, dotted the gullies between the ridges, looking pretty against the green trees and the fields of ripening corn. Beyond the valley, three miles away, the Magaliesberg Range, its huge sides seared and scarred with ravines and tracks, towered up majestically from the surrounding veldt. At its foot a road could be traced, winding in and out until lost to sight in the dim distance. Along this road the Boer commandant (De Wet) had retreated some months previously, when hotly pursued by the British troops under General Methuen, eventually escaping through the pass known as Oliphant's Nek.

As I gazed, my fancy pictured the whole scene. It began with a cloud of dust which rose slowly skywards miles away at the foot of the hills in the east, and then spread along the valley like the smoke from an oncoming train. It approached nearer, and soon resolved itself into a chaos of mounted men, guns, cape-carts, and waggons, that trailed away back for miles. This was the Boer commando. As it approached Oliphant's Nek, the commando halted, and the mounted men moved cautiously forward. This was the supreme moment for the Boer general. Three British columns were closing in upon him from the east, the south, and the west, respectively; and if the Nek were held by the British, he was caught like a rat in a trap. I could imagine I saw the mounted men as they gradually disappeared behind a large kopje in front. Half an hour passed. Then a heliograph twinkled high up in the pass, and shortly afterwards the commando hurriedly advanced over the veldt, and its guns and waggons were soon streaming up through the Nek into the Rustenberg district beyond. The British troops that should have been in occupation had been withdrawn for some unaccountable reason, allowing the wily De Wet to escape once more. The disappointment of General Methuen and his

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men, who had chased the Boer leader for days through the Free State, over the Vaal River, into the Transvaal, marching between twenty and thirty miles daily, and subsisting on half rations, buoyed up by the hope that De Wet could not possibly escape from the cordon of troops that were surrounding him, must have been heartbreaking, when, on arrival at Oliphant's Nek, they found that the birds had flown.

Viewed from my lofty post that morning the valley at my feet looked peaceful and quiet; and I found it hard to realise that it had been the scene of many bloody encounters between Boer and Briton since the beginning of the war. That it deserved its appellation of the "Valley of Death" was only too evident, the numerous graves with which it was covered, bearing ample testimony. It was in this valley, some three miles to the east of my post, that General Clements had, on the night of the 13th of December, suffered a severe reverse at the hand of Commandant De La Rey and three thousand Boers. On that occasion five British officers and nineteen men were killed, numbers were wounded, and five hundred and sixty-three were taken prisoners. The Boers also suffered severely.

We were relieved from outpost at 6.30 p.m. by the I.L.H., so as to be ready to form part of an escort that was to leave at 2 a.m. the following morning to meet a supply convoy expected from Krugersdorp. Leaving camp at the time stated the escort proceeded for sixteen miles along the road—that road which the Jameson Raiders had taken on their march to Johannesberg in 1896—and went into camp at the foot of the hills from which the Boers had fired the first shot on that occasion. A Squadron of the regiment, which had acted as advance guard on the way out, took up the outpost duties on the ridges. From this position we could see the mass of mining shafts and chimney stacks on the part of the Rand overlooking Krugersdorp, although the town, situated as it was in a hollow, could not be seen.

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A POPULAR OFFICER WITH THE FOURTH:
LIEUT.-COL. A. BAUCHOP, C.M.G.

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The convoy came in late in the afternoon, and outspanned for the night. The return journey was without incident, Cypherfontein being reached shortly after 11 o'clock the following morning.

For the next few days nothing occurred to break the monotony of camp routine. The morning of the 11th of February, however, saw the whole of our mounted brigade, with two guns, moving out at 1.30 a.m. in a southerly direction towards a rough line of kopjes. A number of Boers had been reported there, but their strength was not known. Just at daylight we surprised an outpost of about twenty men, who fired a few shots and then endeavoured to get away with three waggons. But we were too quick for them, and soon captured the waggons, together with four prisoners, the others galloping off to warn their main body of our approach. That the enemy were in strong force was soon apparent; and our advance was checked by numbers of them that occupied the kopje in front, from which position they opened a heavy fire on our advance screen of Hussars, compelling the latter to retire at the gallop.

While retiring, one of the Hussars was dismounted and was in great danger of being shot down as he ran for his life—the bullets kicking up the dust around him,—when Captain Bauchop, of the Fourth, pluckily rode out and gave the dismounted trooper his horse, he himself returning on foot to the main body. While the exchange of riders was being effected, however, Bauchop's horse received a mortal wound in the body and dropped dead just as it had carried its rider out of danger. Captain Bauchop was afterwards recommended for the V.C. for his gallantry.

After engaging the Boers for about half an hour, Colonel Grey ordered our retirement to camp; and this was accomplished in safety, although the enemy kept our rear guard busy until we were well clear of the hills.

Previous experience had taught us that, when a number of troops were encamped on one spot for any length of time,

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that spot soon became unhealthy, no matter how good the sanitary arrangements might have been. The presence of horses, mules, and cattle so close to the bivouacs, the hordes of flies they attracted, and the clouds of fine red dust that were continually raised in a permanent camp, were all conducive to this unhealthy state. Our camp at Cypherfontein proved no exception to the rule; and after we had been in occupation for some three weeks, sickness became prevalent, and the strength of our regiment gradually decreased until one hundred men were left to perform the duties that the original two hundred had found a difficulty in carrying out. To those of us that remained fit for duty, the rest of our stay in this camp became a nightmare of outposts, guards, patrols, picquets, and fatigues; and, when the order came about 8 o'clock on the morning of the 6th for us to be ready to march in an hour's time, there was general rejoicing. At first we thought it applied only to the mobile portion of our column; but when the infantry that had been manning the forts and trenches, struck camp, specluation became rife as to the object of the movement.

By 9 a.m. we were on the march, C Squadron of our regiment taking up the advance guard to the column, A Squadron riding with the reserve. Our brigadier (Colonel Grey) had accompanied the ox convoy to Krugersdorp the previous day; and the command of the mounted brigade was assumed by Colonel Davies, Captain Walker taking charge of our regiment. No sooner had we set out than rain commenced to fall heavily, and the road was soon in a bad state. Nine miles out we came to a nek between two ridges of hills. A number of Boers were holding the position, and at once opened a heavy rifle fire on our advance guard. As there was no cover for our men, they were forced to retire. Reserve squadrons were sent out to flank the Boers on either side, while the guns shelled from the front. After a considerable amount of fighting the Boers evacuated the position, but not before they had severely wounded one of our men, Trooper

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A. Robinson, and shot three horses. The march was then resumed, the enemy hanging on the flanks, sniping whenever opportunity offered; but there were no further casualties.

After noon the rain fell more heavily than before; and the mules found great difficulty in drawing the overladen waggons through the mud. Evening came on and found us still trudging wearily along. Several waggons broke down, and with everything they contained were burned. Sacks of oats were next strewn along the road to lighten the other waggons. At 11 o'clock that night it was found impossible to proceed further owing to the darkness and the state of the roads. So a halt was called for the night. Being too weary after our long trek to pitch tents, we rolled ourselves up in our overcoats, and, despite the rain and our wet couches on the bare ground, slept till daylight.

In the morning the weather was as bad as ever; and our departure was delayed till 7 a.m. Another long trek of twenty-two miles across the rain-soaked veldt took us to Ventersdorp, where we went into camp at 6.30 p.m., tired, hungry, and wet. Both the men and the horses were considerably knocked up after the two days' hardship.

When about six miles from Ventersdorp the infantry, owing to fatigue, began to drop out of the ranks. Our regiment was rear guard and could not see the poor Tommies left behind. So we dismounted, gave them our horses, and became for the time being foot soldiers. When at last the camp was neared, the Tommies gave three cheers for the "Bushmen," as they always called the New Zealanders and Australians. That evening the O.C. received the following letter from Lieut.-colonel Sir Robert Colleton, commanding the Royal Welsh Fusiliers:—"The officer on rear guard to-day has told me of the kind way your men assisted my tired ones by giving them a lift on their horses. My men are most grateful to the New Zealanders; and I write on their behalf to tender our thanks, which please convey to your regiment."

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Details, numbering four officers, forty-five men, and seventy-four horses were awaiting our return, and proved a welcome addition to the strength of the regiment.

The hurried nature of our departure from Cypherfontein was explained when we arrived in Ventersdorp. It appeared that, on the morning of the 3rd, the Boers, under De La Rey, made an attack on Lichtenberg, but were driven off after losing fifty-three killed and wounded. A delayed message had reached General Babington on the 6th, ordering him to proceed to the relief of that place by way of Ventersdorp. So we had hastened to the relief of a place that had really relieved itself before we started.

The column remained halted for some days awaiting the arrival of our ox convoy from Krugersdorp. This was delayed by the heavy rains and bad roads, and did not put in an appearance till the 13th. The mounted escort that accompanied it suffered very much from exposure during the trip, as they had no tents with them.

As the outcome of a challenge issued to the Fourth by the I.L.H., a sports meeting was held between these two regiments on the 15th; and, trusting it may be of some interest to the reader, I give the result of the different events:—

100 Yards Flat—Blisset (N.Z.), 1; Hubbard (N.Z.), 2; Gray (N.Z.), 3.

Heavy-weight Wrestling.—Dickson (N.Z.), 1.

Light-weight Wrestling.—J. Ross (N.Z.), 1.

Light-weight Boxing.—Nolan (I.L.H.) beat Tapper (N.Z.).

Middle-weight Boxing.—F. Hall (N.Z.) beat Williams (I.L.H.).

Officers' Boxing.—Lieutenant Elder (N.Z.) beat Captain Crane (I.L.H.).

High Jump.—Lieutenant Elder (N.Z.), 5ft 2in, 1; Tyrell (N.Z.) and Banks (I.L.H.), 5ft, 2.

Tug-of-War, Troopers.—New Zealanders first (easily).

Tug-of-War, Officers.—New Zealanders first.

Wrestling on Horseback.—New Zealanders first.

440 Yards Flat.—Captain Crane (I.L.H.), 1; Blisset (N.Z.), 2; J. C. McLean (N.Z.), 3.

The success of our regiment pleased the Tommies greatly, numbers of whom watched every event with much interest.

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CHAPTER XIV.

From Ventersdorp—The Anniversary of the Departure of the Fourth Contingent from New Zealand.

Wednesday, March 15, saw the column once more on the move, with nine days' rations and forage, this time in a westerly direction along the Lichtenberg road. We were to operate with Colonel Shekelton's column against a large number of Boers, under De La Rey and Smuts, who had been reported in the country lying between Lichtenberg and Klerksdorp. Two uninteresting treks of ten and twelve miles took us to within four miles of Lichtenberg, when camp was pitched at 11 o'clock on the 16th. In the afternoon General Babington rode into the town with a mounted escort, and had an interview with the officer commanding the garrison, returning to camp a little after 6 o'clock.

From this camp we proceeded due south to Kaffir Kraal where the Boers were supposed to be in laager. We arrived there after a three days' trek, only to find that the enemy had cleared out the day before. It was the same old story—cradle empty, baby gone! Kaffir Kraal was at the foot of a large circular area of high veldt fringed with kopjes. After resting for two hours, we pushed on for miles over this high veldt in a vain search for the enemy, and camped at dark in the middle of the tableland.

Colonel Shekelton had evidently been more fortunate than we, as his guns were heard booming all day some miles out on our right flank.

The next morning we marched into Hartebeestefontein, an old-fashioned Dutch village situated at the foot of the ridge on the opposite side of the tableland from Kaffir Kraal.

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Camp was pitched on the low veldt two miles beyond the village; and a convoy was sent into Klerksdorp for supplies. Orders issued that evening contained the welcome information that the column would remain halted the following day; and we turned in for the night happy in the thought that we could sleep in until 6 a.m. at least.

We were wakened at about 3 o'clock by the neighing of horses, the shouting of orders, and other sounds of commotion in the bivouac of the I.L.H. Shortly afterwards we heard the order, "Light Horse, stand to your horses! Prepare to mount! Mount! In column of fours from the right of squadrons, walk! March!" and they moved out into the darkness, leaving the camp in peace and quietness once more. Vaguely wondering what the move was, we coiled up in our warm blankets, and, with a muttered "Poor devils," resumed our slumbers, thankful that we had been left alone. At *reveille* we learnt that several waggons, under an escort of about thirty Boers, had been seen to enter at dusk the previous evening the hills at the back of Hartebeestefontein, and that one hundred and fifty of the I.L.H., under Major Briggs, with a pom-pom, had gone out in an endeavour to catch them.

Shortly after 11 o'clock word was brought into camp that the I.L.H. had been attacked by some four or five hundred Boers on the tableland seven miles out. They had evidently resisted the attack; but, after losing several officers and men, and having their pom-pom disabled, they were retiring on Hartebeestefontein, stubbornly contesting every mile of the country. Re-inforcements were at once ordered out; and the mounted troops, with A Squadron of our regiment, under Captain Nicolson, in advance, left camp at the gallop. Leaving the open veldt at Hartebeestefontein we ascended through a narrow nek on the high veldt, and advanced across the undulating ground in extended order. We proceeded thus for two miles, passing several straggling parties of the I.L.H., and numbers of wounded men lying

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about in different directions, without meeting any of the enemy. Presently, however, we saw a troop at the halt some distance ahead, some mounted, others dismounted and walking about, in a depression at the foot of a high grassy slope—evidently a troop of the I.L.H.

We advanced to within four hundred yards, halted on a crest, and dismounted, the four advanced scouts pushing on. The latter rode right up to the strangers, then turned, and came cantering back. They had just reached us, and the foremost had answered the query of our officer with, "They're Boers, sir," when bang, crash, came a volley of rifle fire, and four of our horses went down, the bullets singing and spitting about our ears. Our captain gave the order to retire; and some of the men scrambled into their saddles and galloped out of range. The rest, however, let their horses go, and lay flat on the grass, and returned the fire. During the next five minutes death stared us in the face, the bullets sang and whistled in the air, but, luckily, none of us were hit; and, on re-inforcements coming up, the Boers made off to the right and to the left. The Fourth had experienced another lucky "let off," and came out of the ordeal with the loss of only three horses killed and two wounded.

On advancing we found that the Boers, when disturbed, had been engaged stripping the dead and wounded I.L.H. One of the latter was a horrible sight, his lower jaw having been shot away leaving the upper row of teeth exposed. As we rode up he raised himself on his elbow, looked vacantly at us for a few seconds, then fell back in a swoon.

When the enemy had been driven off it was found that the unfortunate I.L.H. had sustained the loss of two officers and four men killed, and four officers and eleven men wounded. Their losses would have been much greater had it not been for the coolness and ability of their commanding officer, Major Briggs.

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On our return to camp at 4 o'clock we found that our convoy had returned from Klerksdorp bringing with it a big mail. A number of details of our regiment, under Lieut. Saxby, also arrived, and were attached to their respective squadrons. The strength of the regiment was now over two hundred, and consequently the original order of four squadrons was reverted to for all work on the field. Captains Bauchop, Nicholson, and Pringle resumed command of A, B, and C Squadrons respectively, Lieut. Thompson taking temporary command of D Squadron. Colonel Davies having gone into Klerksdorp on ten days' leave of absence, Captain Walker, D Squadron, had temporary command of the regiment. We looked through our letters by candle light; and when orders came round, "The column will move at 4.30 a.m.," we stowed our newspapers away in our kits to be read on the morrow.

The regiment paraded at 4.30 after the usual biscuit and pannikin of coffee, and moved out along the road, by which we had come, back to Kaffir Kraal. A and B Squadrons formed the advance screen, with C and D in support. Babington's column advanced on the right of the high veldt, while Shekelton's took the left about five miles away from us. We pushed forward without opposition for several miles across the tableland, which was formed like a saucer—the ground sloping up on all sides from the centre to a circumference of rough kopjes.

Passing a couple of native huts we inquired from an old Kaffir where the Boers were. Pointing to the ridge in front he said, "Lappa, Baas," meaning, "over there." Just as we thought, word was passed along the advance guard, and the files extended still further apart as we moved towards the kopjes. Half way up the slope we were met by the fire of a pom-pom and two fifteen pounders, the shells from which buzzed overhead and ploughed into the veldt behind. The old nigger had told the truth, for the Boers were there right enough. Sending our horses back out of

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range we lay flat on the ground, and awaited the arrival of our guns. We had pushed rather far ahead during the advance, and had left the guns miles behind. Consequently it was nearly three-quarters of an hour before they came into action. Meanwhile the shells from the Boer guns fell all around and among us, but, being somewhat protected by the natural slope of the ground, none of us were hit.

Colonel Shekelton then came across from the left; and for some time the two columns peppered the position held by the Boers, eventually driving them on to the low veldt beyond. Our regiment then moved forward and took up outpost duties on the edge of the plateau till dark, the two columns bivouacking close together two miles back. From our outpost we could see the enemy's convoy going away miles off on the plain.

We arrived in camp after dark, and learnt that the I.L.H. had been again cut up while acting as rear guard to the convoy during the march. This was indeed an unfortunate regiment. The previous day they had experienced a trying time, and, in consequence, were given a rest on the rear guard, it being reckoned that the Boers were all in our front, with the result that they had two more killed and several wounded added to their casualty list. On the other hand, our regiment had experienced a miraculous escape the first day, losing three horses only, and this day, after being under a heavy shell fire for nearly an hour, our only casualty was one horse killed—strangely enough one that had been wounded the day before.

Orders came round at 8.30, "Parade 3 a.m., no fires, no lights." That looked like business. General Babington was evidently going to shake the Boers up on the morrow. Later on this order was countermanded, another being issued to the effect that we were to parade at 4.30 instead.

Before turning into my blankets that evening I had been warned for horse picquet, and had gone to sleep ex-

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pecting to be roused at 2 a.m. by the trooper on duty before I was. But he had very considerately slept through his own and through the greater part of my watch, so that it was just on 3 o'clock before he wakened me. When I had counted the horses on the line, shortened and tightened a picquet rope or rheim where necessary, and tied up a stray horse that I found wandering about among the sleeping forms on the ground, I returned to my bivey, and passed the rest of my watch, until *reveille*, in the warm shelter of the blankets. A sleeping camp is a dreary and comfortless picture at any time. I had often seen it before; but this morning it appeared more cheerless than ever. All the fires had been put out the night before, and the only sign of life was in the direction of the hospital tent. There a single light gleamed, reflecting the shadow of an orderly, or of the doctor, moving about attending to the wounded and sick men. The keen morning wind whistled in fitful gusts through the huddled heaps of brown blankets covering the figures of sleeping men, and died away in the distance like a long-drawn out sigh. My thoughts gradually drifted from my immediate surroundings to the little island under the Southern Cross; and I remembered that this was the morning of the anniversary of our leaving New Zealand. Twelve months—it was not long,—but to me it seemed like as many years since we had left New Zealand, so much had we seen and passed through since then.

Four o'clock saw the camp spring into life; and half an hour later the mounted troops of both columns, accompanied by the guns and ambulance waggons, moved northwards out of camp, just as day was breaking. That we were on a business trip was evident from the fact that the convoy was left behind in charge of the infantry, and the guns that usually marched some distance in the rear were pushed right up behind the advance guard. We had gone some two miles —Colonel Shekelton on the left and our column on the right—and were approaching a ridge of rocks that over-

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looked the open veldt, when a few shots were heard in front, followed by the well-known boom of a big gun; and a shell hurtlod over our heads and buried itself in the ground behind. "Halt!"—we dismounted, and General Babington and Colonel Grey rode ahead to the rocks, while the guns galloped into action. Again that "boom," and another shell passed over without causing any damage. Our guns opened fire; and it did us good to hear them replying to the enemy. The previous day the latter had occupied the hills, and had shelled us for nearly an hour as we lay out in the open. But to-day it was the reverse of action; and we appreciated the change.

From where we stood dismounted we could not see what was happening in front. But presently Colonel Grey's hand went up; and we advanced at the trot, followed by the Australians. As we rode up, we could see the Boer gun going off in a cloud of dust about two miles away. Pointing to this with his hunting crop, Colonel Grey said, "Men, there's your chance. Don't throw away your lives." Then he gave the order, "New Zealanders—to the left. Bushmen —to the right. Increase your front to two squadrons each."

We descended on to the veldt, passing the advance guard, who were halted at the foot of the kopje, and then opened out and galloped across the open ground in the direction the gun had taken. A deep spruit stopped our progress somewhat, but a ford was soon found, and we were off again. About fifty Boers waited on a ridge in front to try and check our advance; but a few shells from the pom-pom, fired over our heads from the hill we had just left, settled them, and they hurried on. Mile after mile across the uneven ground the New Zealanders and Australians raced side by side, as they had done often before on different occasions; but to-day we had been ordered to take that gun, and we were determined to take it if our horses held out. Four miles—five miles—and the gun was still somewhere in front hidden from sight by the undulations of the

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ground. Six miles, and as we galloped on to a crest somewhat higher than the surrounding veldt, we saw, not only the Boer gun, but also the Boer convoy making away in front. We were chasing a gun, and had found a convoy! On, on, we rode, catching up to the hindmost waggons at every stride. Groups of Boers rode out, dismounted, and fired point blank at us; but we returned their fire from our horses as we galloped; and they made back to the waggons. Our blood was up. Nothing could stop us now. Eight miles of hard riding began to tell its tale on the horses; and the tired ones were dropping back in the rear, but still struggling on. It was like having a run with the hounds with the quarry in full view, and the riders determined to be in at the death. Two miles more and the leading men were abreast of the bullock waggons. One by one the waggons were passed and stopped. Panic-striken Boers in all directions threw aside their bandoliers and rifles and put up their hands. Keeping well out on the left flank we urged our horses to still greater efforts, and were slowly but surely overhauling the mule waggons and guns, when suddenly the head of the convoy turned away at right angles. That finished it. The Australians came down on the right with an irresistible swoop; we closed in from the left; and it was all over.

Four hundred New Zealanders and Australians had been sent out to capture a Boer gun, and had captured the whole of the Boer convoy, guns, waggons, prisoners, and all, without having a man hit. Shortly after the capture had been effected, General Babington and his staff rode up, followed by the I.L.H. and M.I. regiments; and congratulations were showered upon us from all sides.

A return was then made to the laager at Leeuwfontein, from which the Boer convoy had made such a hurried exit earlier in the day. We were joined here by Colonel Shekelton; and the two columns bivouacked at 3 o'clock. The rest

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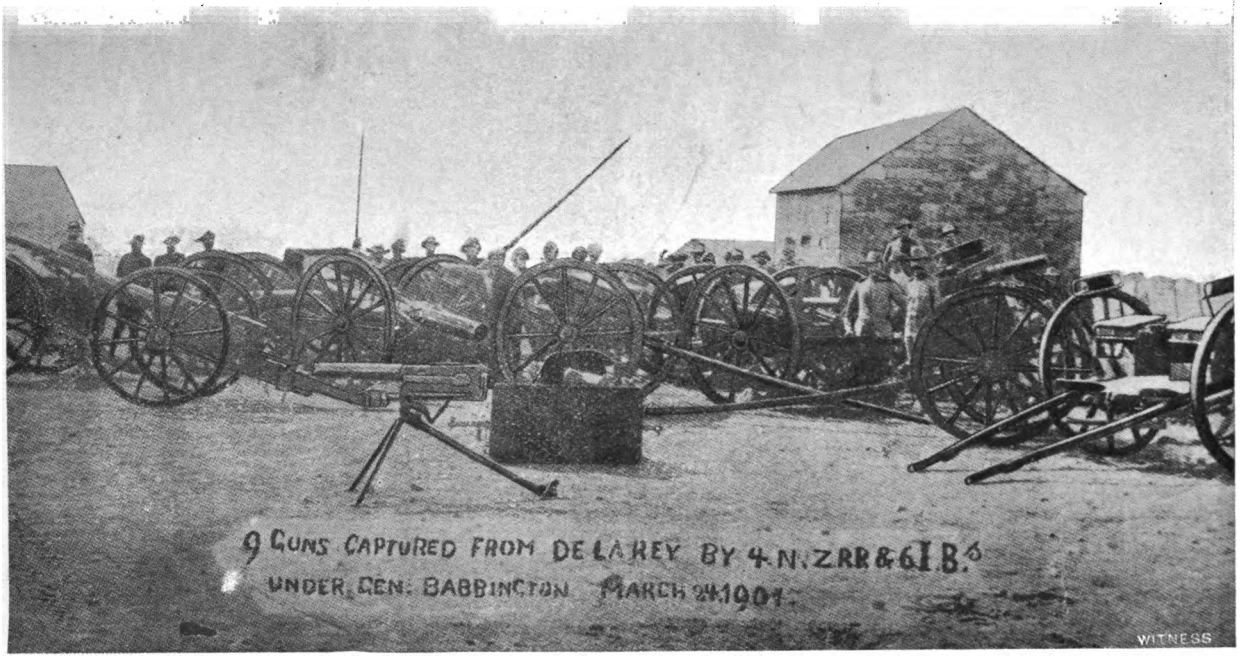

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of the afternoon was occupied by the Provost Marshal in reckoning up the extent of our capture, and his list finally shewed: —

135 prisoners
53 loaded waggons
24 cape-carts
1 pom-pom
2 fifteen-pounders
6 Maxims
1 ammunition-waggon
198 rifles
15,000 rounds of small-round ammunition
300 fifteen-pounder shells
100 pom-pom shells
7 cwt. of dynamite
And hundreds of horses, trek oxen, cattle, and sheep.

[It may here be mentioned that the two fifteen-pounders taken were formerly part of Colonel Long's battery lost at Colenso in December. It was in trying to save these that Lieut. Roberts—the only son of Lord Roberts—lost his life]. In addition, seven Boers were killed and six wounded.

That night a strong guard from the Fourth was mounted over the prisoners, who were placed in an open space in the centre of the camp with their blankets and other belongings; and fourteen sentries were posted in a circle around them at intervals of five yards. Some distance behind the ring of sentries lay the two reliefs in their blankets, ready to turn out at a minute's notice should an alarm be given. Three non-coms. kept constantly on the move on the outside of the circle, and posted the different reliefs every two hours.

While on duty with the first relief the writer had an interesting conversation with a young Boer prisoner. This young fellow had lived in Pretoria prior to the outbreak of the war, and, on the commencement of hostilities, had joined a Boer commando, and took part in the heavy fighting in Natal in the early stages of the war. (Apparently he came of a good family and spoke English fluently.) Referring briefly

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to the battle of Magersfontein he said that the first he remembered seeing on that fateful morning was a number of Highlanders helping themselves to water from the Boer water carts. At one stage of the fighting the British troops came on with such daring, despite the murderous rifle fire directed on them, that many of the Boers wavered and commenced to leave the trenches; but, seeing the Highlanders suddenly turn and run back like so many buck, they returned and poured lead into the unfortunate Britishers, mowing them down in dozens. It was terrible; and he said he could never forget it. After chatting about the fighting around Ladysmith he suddenly remarked, "My word you fellows were too quick for us to-day. You completely surprised us. After seeing you go into camp on the kop last night our commando, with the exception of six hundred burghers, who remained on outpost with a fifteen-pounder, went into laager with the waggons and guns at Leeuwfontein. At daylight this morning five hundred of the burghers came in from outpost, and reported there were no fires nor lights in your camp, and no signs of your moving. Thinking that all was safe now, and that you 'English' would not come any further, but would return to Klerksdorp, we turned our bullocks and mules out to graze, and prepared ourselves for a day's rest. At about 5 o'clock two of our outpost galloped into the laager calling out, 'Inspan! inspan! The Khakis are coming.' Then you should have seen the excitement. The mules and bullocks were brought in and inspanned. Waggons were hastily loaded up, and were soon trekking away across the veldt. Our mounted men then rode back to try and stop you. Five miles out we met the remainder of the outpost with our gun, retiring as fast as horses could gallop. We went on for a mile, and then saw you 'English' coming over the veldt like a swarm of locusts. You say there were only four hundred altogether? Well, you looked a thousand to us. We waited till you came closer, then opened fire; but it was no use. You would not stop. I think we must have lost

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our heads then. We had never seen the "English" come on like that before, and we did not know what to do. A number of the burghers mounted their ponies and galloped off, and soon afterwards those of us that were left rode back and caught up to the waggons. We kept the mules and bullocks going for some time, but could not get away; and you were soon among us shouting and yelling and firing. It could not be helped. You were too good for us." Among other questions, the young prisoner asked if it were true that our Queen had died. On being answered in the affirmative, he remarked that he was very sorry. He then asked who had been put on the throne; and learning that the Prince of Wales had been made King, he said, "Oh! I have heard a lot about him. He's a hard case that fellow—a regular British lion."

Next day we left Leeuwfontein at 12 o'clock, and trekked back to Ventersdorp with our prize, reaching the little township just before dusk. As the other regiments were marched to their own lines, the New Zealanders and Australians were paraded, before dismounting, in close column of squadrons, and addressed by Colonel Grey as follows:—

"Officers and men of the Fourth New Zealanders and Sixth Imperial Bushmen Regiments, I wish to express my high appreciation of the work you have done during the past week, and especially to thank you for your splendid achievement of yesterday. You saw your opportunity and took it. Most troops would not have attempted it. But your brilliant flanking movement enabled you to score a great success. By your dash and gallantry you have made one of the most important captures, if not in the whole war, at least in the latter part of the war. The nine guns you took were not dug up out of the ground. They were not found in the beds of rivers. They were not discovered hidden among the trees of the forest. They were taken in fair fight, in the face of a bold and determined foe. Your capture yesterday

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will have a most important effect in bringing the war to a close. It is by far the biggest thing that has been done in the Western Transvaal. I am proud of you; and again I thank you."

It was indeed a proud moment in our lives as we sat listening to such words of praise from a stern, unbending officer like Colonel Grey, who was more given to blame than to praise.

Next morning the two regiments were again paraded, this time to hear General Babington, who said:—

"Colonel Grey, officers, and men, I am not a great hand at public speaking, and hope, therefore, that you will make allowances for my shortcomings. But I have called you together this morning to thank you for your great services the day before yesterday. No troops could have done better. Few could have done so well. I thank you all. I have never commanded men who showed more daring or more brilliant attack. You are splendidly officered, and your brigadier (Colonel Grey) is second to none in South Africa. Since I have had the honour of commanding you, I have attempted things I have never dared before. With you I would again take risks that I would not venture to take with other troops. I shall mention individual names in my despatches to Lord Kitchener, and I know that the services you have rendered will be recognised with pride, not only by the colonies to which you belong, but also by the Mother Country."

The following telegrams regarding the capture were received by General Babington:—

From General Commander-in-chief, Lord Kitchener, 25th March, 1901—"I heartily congratulate you and your troops on the important success you have obtained. Let me know who specially distinguished themselves."

The reply was sent from General Babington to Lord Kitchener—"Your Lordship's kind message has given the greatest satisfaction to all ranks."

From Colonel Kekewich—"Many congratulations to you, and Bushmen, and New Zealanders."

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CHAPTER XV.

LIEUT. J. R. MACDONALD'S DESCRIPTION OF THE CAPTURE.

"Sunday, March 24th, the anniversary of our sailing from Dunedin. Up at 4 o'clock. No fires and no lights. Had a biscuit and a cup of cold coffee left over from the night before.

"Everyone was riding light in expectation of a big day. Farriers had been at work up till midnight fixing shoes. Officers lent their spare horses to men whose horses had knocked up the day before. I had a fresh mount that had come out with the convoy from Klerksdorp, and Maloney rode my old horse (Sergt. Ross's Highland Chief).

"Everyone was eager and alert as we mounted and moved out. The very air seemed charged with expectation. 'I hope we'll get on to them to-day, sir. It's our anniversary.' We were moving out from the foot of the hills over the low veldt. Would we find them there? Let us hope that they had not doubled back to the hills during the night. It is now broad daylight, and we can see the advance screen spread out in front of us, and Shekelton's column moving parallel to us on our left.

"Two miles out and a few shots are heard in front.

"'By jove, they're there after all.' But perhaps it is a small outpost.

"'Halt!' and we dismount on the level screened by a low outcrop of rocks about as high as the Ocean Beach sandhills. Only a few shots. There's nothing in it. The advance screen is already going on again, when suddenly 'boom' from ahead, and a shell comes hurtling towards us. Another, and another.

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"'They are there, after all. They're going to make a stand. We've got on to them.'

"Shekelton's guns at once gallop up on our left and get into action. Ours are up a few minutes later in front of us. And then pom-poms and fifteen pounders are talking back. Captain Bauchop and I cantered up to the rocks to have a look. There was the Boer gun on a long, open, grassy rise about two miles away. A flash from her, and we ducked as the shell came towards us, but our guns had got the range now. She spoke no more, and we saw a shell fall so close to a solitary horseman where the gun had stood that it seemed a miracle that he galloped away.

"'Mount,' called Colonel Grey, who was standing on the rocks close to us, and Bauchop and I cantered back to our troops. 'Trot,' and away we went for the Boer gun hill. A mile down the slope and a barbed-wire fence in the hollow checks us for a minute; but cutters are at work, and on we go again in our usual order, A Squadron leading; followed in succession by B, C, and D. The advance screen, cantering up the slope half a-mile ahead of us, presents a most curious appearance. The long grass is up to the feet of the riders, the horses legs are invisible, and man and horse are so peculiarly blended as they swing slightly to right or left that they look exactly like a number of women in loose skirts on the slope, their dresses swaying from side to side as they walked.

"We reach the top of the rise and find the advance guard dismounted and firing at the enemy, who are all dotted along the next slope over two or three miles of front. There is the Boer gun about two miles off getting away as fast as its mules can gallop. We are cantering over the wide top of the rise, when Colonel Grey gives his order—'Go on, and take that gun. New Zealanders to the left—Bushmen to the right. Increase your front to two squadrons each.'

"Our chance had come at last! We had grown used to advancing on kopjes to be fired on by an invisible foe, using

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smokeless powder. We had grown familiar with taking kopjes under fire only to find, when we had won them, that the enemy had galloped off out of range, and had taken up a position behind the next kopje. But to-day the scene was changed. Before us was open undulating country as far as the eye could reach. No cursed kopjes behind which death lurked unseen. Nothing but rolling downs on which one Colonial was good enough for one Boer. And they were there in hundreds. The New Zealanders were two hundred strong, and the Bushmen about the same strength. Perhaps one Colonial would need to be good enough for two Boers before the day was over, but that was a mere trifle. It was our Anniversary Day. Colonel Grey had told us to take that gun, and we were going to take it.

"We left the advance guard (a squadron of Australians) dismounted where they were, and took up the running ourselves. As we cantered down the slope, B Squadron galloped up into line on the left of A Squadron. The Otago and Southland boys were thus in the lead, with the North Island (C and D) in support.

"A spruit down in the hollow. We'll get it hot from Johnny as we cross that. 'Open out,' we call to our men. Of course we should have said 'from the right, left, or centre, at five, ten, twenty, or one hundred yards extend,' but we don't always stick to the red-covered drill book. When we tell our boys to 'open out' it's all right. They know from which flank to extend, and they know the working interval.

"Down the slope we gallop. 'Look out for holes.' We are rattling through a mealie patch, the tall waving tops brushing our shoulders as we ride; we are racing for the spruit, when suddenly from behind us comes the welcome sound—pom-pom, pom-pom.

"'What ho! she bumps. Bump them again.'

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"Good old Puerera, of the Coldstream Guards. 'Puerera Pom-pom,' as we call him when he comes to frolic in our tents, had galloped his gun on to the hill we had just ridden over, and landed half a dozen beauties right among the Johnnies who were waiting to deal it out to us as we crossed the spruit. 'Good business. That'll shift them. Why don't they always bring their guns up like that?' Pom-pom again spoke Puerera, as we dashed into the spruit. 'That's the game. Let her go Gallagher,' cried the boys; and Trooper Joll, who had struck a deep place, swam his horse through. We straggled a bit as we cantered up the slope, our formation being broken in crossing the spruit, but the Otago and Southland boys still covered a mile of front, being about one hundred strong, extended at twenty yards intervals.

"Groups of Boers, here a dozen and there a dozen, made off as we galloped on.

"Six miles we had come without drawing rein. We breasted another swell, and saw—Oh, glorious sight!—not only the Boer gun, but the Boer convoy making away to our right front.

"'Change direction to the right,' we yelled. 'There's the convoy,' and round the boys swung. It was pretty to see them work. No bunching or grouping. The intervals between files were still there.

"'We ought to collar some of that convoy to-day, sir.'

"'We'll collar the lot if the horses will only hold out.'

"The long line of waggons was strung out in twos and threes on the veldt, travelling as fast as their teams could take them. The hindmost waggons were still two miles from us. No need to tell the boys to 'come on.' Everyone was at his best. Anniversary Day, and our day out.

"'Look out for those "blighters" on the left there.' The boys fire at them from their horses as they gallop, and the 'blighters' gallop off.

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"Eight miles over hill and hollow. Still we urge our horses on. It is the survival of the fittest. Another spruit. At it we race. Tired horses are falling back in the running. There are not more than sixty men in the front rank now. Jickell's troop does some good work driving off some 'boodgers' that were rather 'sticky.'

"Ten miles, and the leading men are now abreast of the waggons. Then the fun really begins. Rumble gets a bullet through his sleeve. Drinnan gets one through his helmet. But who's going to stop now? Trooper Wylie takes on four Boers himself. They fire at him from their horses and miss. He drops two of them, and the others gallop off. 'Hands up, Johnny. Throw down that gun.' On they go from waggon to waggon.

"'Put up your hands.' And mule teams are turned round. 'Hands up—you. Put down that Mauser,' and the fifteen pounder is captured.

"So it went on for three or four miles along that straggling line of waggons, guns, and carts, the Australians coming in at a gallop from the right, shortly after we swooped down on the left.

"Shekelton's column was away out miles on our left; but they were too late for the fair altogether. It was all over long before they arrived on the scene; but as we rode back with our capture, Colonel Shekelton himself, and his officers were most enthusiastic in their congratulations. The I.L.H. and the composite regiments were coming along in support somewhere behind us; but we left them and our guns out of sight and out of mind.

"The whole affair seemed to resolve itself into this—that two hundred New Zealanders and two hundred Australians got the word to 'go,' and they went. Four hundred Colonials were turned loose on six or seven hundred Boers in open country, and rode straight at them, and ever as we galloped at them the Boers scattered and fell back. They told us afterwards, 'When we saw you galloping at us like that we knew then that you were the Colonials.'"

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CHAPTER XVI.

NEARING THE END—COLONEL GREY'S FAREWELL—OUR FINAL TREK.

Ventersdorp was the headquarters of the column for the next five days, during which the men and horses obtained a much-needed rest after their exertions of the previous trek. On the 30th Colonel Shekelton's column returned from Potchefstroom where it had taken the prisoners and guns captured by us on the 24th. Two days later both columns marched out towards Tafel Kop, where the Boers were reported to be in strong force. A miserable trek of two days in heavy rain took us to Putfontein, where we bivouacked at 3 p.m. on the 3rd. At 12 o'clock the same night all the mounted men, accompanied by the guns, left camp in an endeavour to surprise the enemy. We marched till daylight, leaving our transport behind. We found the Boers in force at Reitpan, and got them on the run shortly after daylight. We could not, however, get into touch with their main body, but our guns nevertheless did some good practice; and we succeeded in capturing several prisoners and a number of waggons. It proved a long day for us, as we did not get back to the outspanned waggons until after 8 p.m., having been in the saddle since 12 o'clock the previous night.

Next day, having resumed our march to Tafel Kop, we went into bivouac there at 4 o'clock, after a trek of eleven miles in the rain. The column remained halted here for three days; and during this time the mounted men were kept busy clearing up the surrounding country within a large radius of the kop. Several prisoners and numbers of waggons were captured; and quantities of poultry, fruit, vegetables,

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and forage were secured. On the 8th a return was made to Ventersdorp, where we were delighted to find a mail awaiting us.

Two days later the columns were again on the move, this time along the valley in the direction of Klerksdorp. Colonel Rawlinson, who had taken over the command of Shekelton's column, operated on the right flank, General Babington's working along the foot of the hills to the left. We went into camp at Bulkop early in the afternoon having seen nothing of the enemy. A Squadron of the Fourth took up the left flank guard, when the column moved off at 5.30 a.m. the following day, and proceeded along the kopjes in single file. A few shots were fired at us by some snipers, but otherwise the trek was uneventful; and we bivouacked at Platburg, six miles from Klerksdorp. Instead of proceeding into the latter place next morning, as we had fully expected, the column trekked across the veldt in the direction of the hills surrounding Hartebeestefontein, and went into camp on the open plain close to Commandant Lynberg's farm. From here a convoy was sent into Klerksdorp for supplies, and returned with a stock of groceries and fresh bread. During the afternoon a "Tommy" was drowned while bathing in a creek not far from camp.

At daylight on the 13th the mounted men and some of the guns left camp. We covered about ten miles to the mining township of Buffelsdoorn without encountering a single Boer, and returned at sundown after a monotonous ride under a scorching sun. The following night at 12 o'clock the mounted men, accompanied by the long-range Elswick gun, a howitzer, and two fifteen-pounders, left camp and marched along the creek towards Ventersdorp. After a twenty-mile ride we found the Boers at Kaffir Kraal. Colonel Rawlinson's column captured a small outpost, and when day broke we got right amongst the main body of the enemy. After a sharp engagement, lasting about an hour, the latter made off, leaving in our hands thirty-five prisoners,

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a twelve-pounder Krupp (formerly belonging to R.H.A.), two pom-poms, and twelve waggons. We were engaged in desultory firing all day, and returned to camp after dark thoroughly tired out and very hungry.

The two columns moved off on the 17th, and crossing the creek at Lynberg's farm, trekked to Buffelsdoorn. The I.L.H., acting as advance-guard, ran against some of the enemy, and through taking a kopje the wrong way, lost two killed. In the afternoon our Elswick, or "Gentle Annie," as she had been named by the troopers, did some long-range shooting from the camp, the accurate firing being watched with considerable interest.

The mounted men of both columns, with the guns, left at 7 o'clock next morning, trekking towards Hartebeestefontein. When within about four thousand yards of the township they formed up with a front of nearly four miles; and all our guns came into action, firing over our heads on to the hills in the rear, where the Boers were entrenched in an impregnable position. It was a fine spectacle to see the lyddite, the Elswick, the three fifteen-pounders, and the two pom-poms going at top continuously for over four hours, planting shells in the township and on the hillside. The gunners did some fine shooting. Five of the enemy were seen to take shelter behind a heap of stones, a lyddite shell found them out, and only one moved away. Another shell landed amongst a mob of saddled horses, and accounted for them all. After firing nearly five hundred shells the word to cease fire was passed along; and shortly afterwards we returned to camp having failed to dislodge the enemy from their position. Next day a convoy was sent into Klerksdorp to replenish our stock of ammunition.

Nothing of note occurred till the 21st (Sunday), when we had a very lively time. At 6 a.m. our column left camp, riding along the foot of the hills towards Ventersdorp, Rawlinson's column, with the two convoys, trekking parallel to us some three miles away on the flat to our right. After

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going about two miles a number of Boers were seen in some scrub at the foot of the kopjes, two thousand yards off. The pom-pom accompanying the advance guard of I.L.H. at once opened on them, being replied to by a heavy rifle fire from the enemy. Our two fifteen-pounders also burst a few shrapnel on the kopje, but without any apparent effect, as the rifle fire still continued. Colonel Grey then ordered B Squadron of the Fourth to take up a position on a ridge overlooking the scrub; but they were compelled to retire when within two hundred yards, owing to the terrific Mauser fire that the Boers, lining the whole of the ridge, opened on them. The fifteen-pounders then turned their attention to the ridge, and B Squadron returned to the charge at the gallop, and took the position in splendid style, the enemy retiring and occupying a kopje further back. For the next two miles the Boers kept up a heavy rifle fire from the left flank and from the rear, and before we were clear of the hills succeeded in wounding three of the I.L.H., besides killing two horses. Soon after, the column went into bivouac three miles out on the open veldt, at Cypher Khuil. Orders issued that evening informed us that the columns were to remain halted to await the arrival of several other British columns, when a general attack would be made on the position occupied by the Boers.

A day later a convoy, escorted by Rawlinson's mounted men, left for Klerksdorp to obtain a fresh supply of provisions for both columns. During the afternoon the regiment put in three hours' work digging trenches and gun-pits, and throwing up earth-works, to protect the camp against attack. On the return of the convoy on the 24th, we learnt that the Boers had attacked it in strong force, giving the troops accompanying it a very warm time. It appears that, as soon as Rawlinson's men, who had escorted it free of the hills, had left on their return to camp, four or five hundred Boers were seen coming across the veldt at a gallop towards the convoy. The small rear guard composed of a troop of the 8th Mounted Infantry, kept them at bay till their

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ammunition became exhausted, when they retired on the waggons. The Boers seeing the rear guard retire, despite the fact that the two fifteen-pounders were pumping shrapnel into them at a great rate, came on with a rush, but they had reckoned without "Tommy." Two companies of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers that were riding in the empty waggons quietly formed up alongside the guns and allowed the enemy to get within eight hundred yards, when they poured in four volleys, completely staggering the Boers, and causing them to gallop back out of range. As showing how close the enemy were to the guns, which doubtless were what they were after, the gunners were using case shot at a range of eight hundred yards. When the convoy came back over the ground, nineteen graves were counted, these bearing evidence to the fact that the Boers had lost heavily in the engagement. Our casualties amounted to three killed and eight wounded, all belonging to the 8th Mounted Infantry.

On the evening of the 26th a special order was issued that every man, with all gear on, was to sleep beside his rifle, as it was expected that the Boers, who had been strengthened during the day by a large commando under General Smuts, contemplated a night attack. However, the attack did not come off, and we were left to sleep in peace.

The fighting strength of the two columns at this time was nearly two thousand, having been augmented on May 1 by the arrival of a regiment of Imperial Yeomanry that had accompanied a convoy out from Klerksdorp. The brand-new appearance of these men as they rode into camp at dusk caused much amusement. Everything about them was new, uniforms, rifles, saddlery, and horses; and the majority were carrying telescopes and field-glasses slung across their shoulders. They certainly formed a decided contrast to our veldt-stained men. A number of the latter and of the Austarlians good-naturedly went across to lend a hand to pitch camp, and incidently to pick up anything that offered in the shape of loot. In the course of conversation with the Yeo-

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manry, we soon found them to be as green as they looked; and they were much astonished on being told that there were any amount of Boers in the surrounding hills. They informed us that most of their number had been tradesmen at Home, and not more than twenty had been on horseback previous to their arrival in Capetown a few weeks before. Under cover of darkness that night many exchanges of horses took place; and the Australians and New Zealanders benefited considerably at the expense of the new arrivals.

The remainder of our stay at Cypher Khuil was characterised by minor encounters that were of daily occurrence between our mounted men and the Boers; but beyond these nothing of interest took place until the 5th of May. On this date the long-expected attack on the enemy's position by the combined British columns was begun. Leaving the infantry in charge of the transport, the mounted portion of General Babington's column moved out at daylight in a northerly direction, and just before noon joined General Methuen at Kaffir Kraal. Both parties then ascended to the higher veldt and advanced across the plateau towards Hartebeestefontein, Colonel Rawlinson meanwhile advancing from the south, and a column under General Wilson from the west. Although we saw large numbers of the enemy in the distance moving west, we did not arrive within striking distance of them, but succeeded in capturing a detached party of eleven men and several waggons. General Wilson appeared to be more fortunate for we could hear the continuous booming of his big guns all the afternoon. That night the Fourth regiment remained in the hills on outpost duty, the rest of the troops returning to camp at Cypher Khuil. The following morning the column joined us at daylight, and continued in the direction of Hartebeestefontein. We fully expected to have a big "go" with the enemy during the day, as it was generally supposed that we had them surrounded; but we were much disappointed on learning that they had slipped through under cover of the darkness the night before. However, there was consolation in the fact

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that they had been effectually dislodged from their position. The column went into bivouac on the plateau close to Hartebeestefontein early in the afternoon; and from there the mounted men rode out to Gedult, and dug up a twelve-pounder Krupp gun that the Boers had buried the previous day.

A quiet trek of ten miles a day later saw the column at Brakfontein, the scene of a former encampment. Here our Brigadier (Lieut.-colonel Grey) took leave of us. Prior to his departure he issued the following farewell order to the Second Brigade of the Rhodesian Field Force:—"The time has now arrived when I must reluctantly bid farwell to the Second Brigade, which I have had the honour to command for nearly a year. I desire to thank sincerely every officer, non-commissioned officer, and man of the brigade, for the cordial co-operation and assistance they have one and all given me. Eleven months of continuous services in the field has proved the officers and men of the brigade to be worthy of the best traditions of the British Army, and men with whom it is a pleasure to be associated, and whom it is an honour to command. The losses in the field and from sickness have been very severe; but they have failed to damp the patriotic spirit which has characterised the troops. That the brigade has been, latterly, so much broken up is a matter of keen regret to myself, but it is an honour to the regiment concerned, inasmuch as the services of even small parties have been eagerly sought after by other commanders. Representations to the highest authorities have elicited the fact that exigencies of the service demanded that a portion of the brigade should be detached from headquarters, and with that we must be content, and also in the knowledge that our comrades departed from us in the field have nobly sustained the high character of the brigade. Very soon you will be relieved from your arduous duties; and I trust you will have a speedy and safe return to your homes. May God bless you and protect you in your future life as citizens of the great Empire; and, should you be again called upon

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to defend the cause of right and justice, I am confident you will do so in the same loyal and noble spirit that you have shewn in South Africa."

The mounted men were all exceedingly sorry to part with the gallant Colonel who was, without doubt, the finest gentleman and officer with whom we were associated in South Africa, and the success of many of our encounters with the Boers was attributable to his splendid generalship. Long may he live!

After the departure of Colonel Grey, the command of the brigade was taken over by Lieut.-colonel Hickie.

Before daylight on Thursday, May 9, General Babington's mounted men left camp at Palmietfontein, and had a long chase in pursuit of the enemy, and after galloping nearly ten miles, came up with a Boer convoy at Leeuwfontein. The enemy divided up into three parties; and we managed to secure twenty-five prisoners, twelve waggons, and a large number of sheep and cattle. Colonel Dixon's column, which had left Klerksdorp a few days previously, and with which was a squadron of Fifth New Zealanders, operated on our right flank and had succeeded in making a capture. On this occasion two over-zealous members of the Fourth regiment chased part of the enemy's convoy "on their own," and were captured by the Boers; but, after having their horses and arms taken from them, they were released and reached camp the following morning. These were the only members of the Fourth captured during our period of active service in South Africa.

Friday, May 10, saw the column leaving camp on what proved to be the final trek as far as the New Zealanders and Australians were concerned. This occupied five days, during which a considerable area of country—lying to the west of Klerksdorp—was cleared up. We did not meet with many Boers, but succeeded in capturing, at various farms visited, large quantities of sheep and cattle besides a number of waggons. With these we returned to Klerksdorp, where we

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arrived a little before 10 o'clock on the morning of the 15th. The same afternoon our horses, with the exception of ninety-three New Zealand horses that were to be sent down to the Seventh New Zealanders at Elandsfontein, were transferred to the remount camp at the recreation ground. This parting with the faithful brutes that had carried us safely out of many tight places, and that had shared our dangers for many months past, was the severest wrench we had yet experienced; and it was with heavy hearts that we returned to camp leaving our horses to the tender mercies of any regiment that might happen along requiring remounts. This was the beginning of the end. That evening our lines were visited by members of the various regiments attached to the column. They had come over to spend the last evening with the Maorilanders, and to wish us *bon voyage*, and a safe return to New Zealand. All night long the sounds of singing and laughter issued from the numerous tents, awakening the echoes in the surrounding hills; and the signs of a new day were showing in the east before the last "Auld Lang Syne" had been sung and our comrades-in-arms had betaken themselves to their own quarters.

Next day we paraded on foot with our kits, and marched to the railway station. As we passed the bivouacs of the Imperial Light Horse, of the Royal Artillery, of the Imperial Yeomanry (It was this same regiment that lost so heavily in a desperate fight at Vlakfontein some two months later, when numbers of them were reported to have been murdered in cold blood by the Boers.), of the Sixth Australian Bushmen, and of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers, the respective regiments lined up and gave us a magnificent send-off, cheering us to the echo till we were out of sight.

We entrained at 4 o'clock, and shortly afterwards moved out of Klerksdorp on our long, weary ride to Capetown.

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CHAPTER XVII.

KLERKSDORP—WORCESTER—CAPETOWN.

Our first halt was made at Potchefstroom shortly after 7 o'clock. We found a refreshment bar on the station here, and experienced the novelty of drinking tea from real cups, and eating bread spread with fresh butter. The proprietor of the bar had expected us, and had prepared a great quantity of sandwiches; but these proved wholly inadequate to satisfy appetites that had been sharpened for months on bully beef and biscuits; and a few minutes after our arrival not a crumb of food was to be found anywhere.

We passed through Johannesberg some time between 11 o'clock and midnight; but as the majority of us were wrapped in slumber, we did not catch a glimpse of the golden city.

Daylight next morning found us at Elandsfontein, where we breakfasted before resuming our journey. Captain Bauchop, Lieuts. Elder, Saxby, and Tubman, and twenty-five men left us here to join the Seventh New Zealanders at Standerton. They had been preceeded by Lieut. Seddon, who had left two weeks earlier to meet the Seventh, and to take over his command. If we had found it hard to take leave of the Australians and Welsh Fusiliers at Klerksdorp, we found it still harder to say good-bye to our officers and comrades here; and the parting was keenly felt by all when the train moved away from the station leaving the small party standing on the platform waving a last farewell.

A melancholy interest attaches to the following incident. Just before we left Elandsfontein, Corporal R. W. Wylie, of C Squadron, informed Colonel Davies that he had decided at the last moment to remain and join the Seventh Contingent. On being asked the reason for his action, he said

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that his mate was stopping, and he did not like leaving him in the lurch. Wylie was afterwards shot dead during the first engagement in which he took part with the Seventh.

After a monotonous and uneventful ride of nine hours under a scorching sun, we arrived at Kroonstad at 5 o'clock. A halt was called here for the night, as it was considered to be too dangerous for us to proceed in the darkness owing to the presence of several Boer commandos in the vicinity of the railway. Our train was thereafter shunted on to a siding; and after we had had our usual meal, we turned into our blankets for the night. It must have been close on midnight when we were awakened by a terrific crash, which threw us and our kits in a heap against the farther end of the trucks. Our first thoughts were that we had been dynamited; and we grabbed our rifles to await further developments. We soon learnt, however, than an armoured train, which was being sent to the assistance of a small garrison farther up the line, was the cause of the mischief. In the hurry and bustle of the train's departure, the pointsman had run her on to the line occupied by us, thus causing the collision. Luckily she had not got full speed on, or the career of the majority of the Fourth would have ended there and then. As it was several of us sustained nasty cuts and bruises; and two of the trucks were rather badly damaged as a result of the impact.

The next morning, Saturday the 18th, we left Kroonstad at daylight, and entered on the third day of our journey. This, like its predecessor, turned out exceedingly warm; and in consequence we suffered considerably from the heat. Railway travelling in South Africa is uninteresting and monotonous even when one is surrounded by all the comforts of a first saloon carriage; but when forced, as we were, to travel in open trucks at the mercy of sun, dust, and smoke by day, and the icy-cold winds by night, it becomes intolerable—at least such was our experience. When leaving Klerksdorp we had all been in high spirits at the thought

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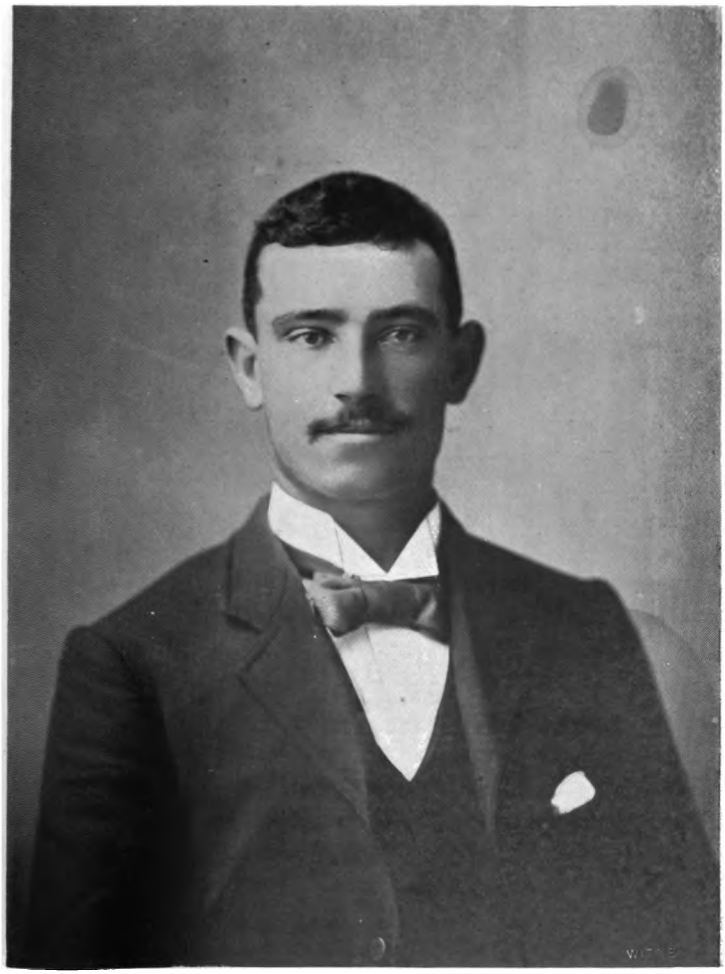

THE LATE CORPORAL F. W. WYLIE.

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of having started on our return home; but two days out the re-action after the exciting life we had led for months past on the veldt, set in. We missed our horses. We missed the companionship of the Australians and Welsh Fusiliers. Nothing interested us; and we would gladly have welcomed an attack by the Boers or any other excitement that would have tended to relieve our feelings. At many of the stations at which our train stopped we found guards of Tommies lined up to prevent our going on to the platforms, which were reserved for officers and civilians. As may be imagined this did not serve to improve our already sorely-tried tempers, and—well, we were too full for words. What had we done, we asked ourselves, that we should be treated like so many niggers. We had fought and bled and starved on the veldt for months. We had suffered all manner of indignities at the hands of men who were superior to us only in rank. Generals and lesser officers had praised the work we had accomplished in the field. The Commander-in-chief himself had eulogised the services we had rendered to the Mother Country. Yet, now that our regiment had gone out of commission, and we were of no further use to the British Army, we were dumped into trucks like a mob of cattle, hunted from the platforms of railway stations, and placed on a level with the scum of South Africa. Twelve months of active service had convinced us that there is no sentiment in warfare, and that no such thing as patriotism exists; but surely we deserved better treatment than was meted out to us by the authorities.

That evening we ran into Bloemfontein just before 6 o'clock, and, as at Kroonstad, were shunted on a side line for the night. Our journey was resumed at 8 o'clock the following morning, Sunday. Mid-day saw us halted at a wayside station to enable a train laden with troops bound for the front to pass. The men were all light-hearted and confident, as soldiers going off to war always are We remarked that they did not travel in trucks like we did, but were accommodated in carriages; and one trooper tersely

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put it that they were being "kidded" to. We did not envy them, however, rather did we pity them, knowing what they would have to go through 'ere they would embark on their return home.

An uninterrupted run of two hours brought us in sight of the famous Orange River; and, soon after, we ran across the bridge, and came to a stop at Norval's Pont, a little village situated on the south bank of the river. We remained here some three hours, during which many of us enjoyed a refreshing plunge, then strolled about viewing the places of interest in the vicinity. In our wanderings we happened across a small cemetery lying in the shade of a grove of weeping willows in a secluded spot overlooking the river. In this little plot we counted sixty-two plain wooden crosses, marking the last resting places of as many soldiers. Disease had been responsible for the deaths of no less than fifty-nine, mostly the dread enteric, one had been drowned, and another accidentally killed. The remaining cross bore the brief inscription, "Shot on Patrol," a simple phrase which conveys a good deal—but only to the initiated. Of the word "patrol" the dictionary will offer a simple explanation; but the average lay mind has no idea of its real meaning in warfare—especially in war against an enemy like the Boer. It requires more courage, more real pluck, to successfully carry out reconnoitering duties than to make a charge in company with hundreds of your fellows, in the face of a deadly fire. In the latter case the excitement, the spirit of military display, the confidence in yourself, the anxiety to get at the enemy, all combine to impel the men to brilliant dash and daring. But the patrolling—that is quite a different matter. Two or three men walk their horses in a leisurely manner up to the kopjes and examine them for signs of the enemy. Finding none, the next cover is examined, and so on. The patrols are on the open, the Boers lurking behind boulders, hidden from sight. Probably the first notice the unlucky man has of the vicinity of the

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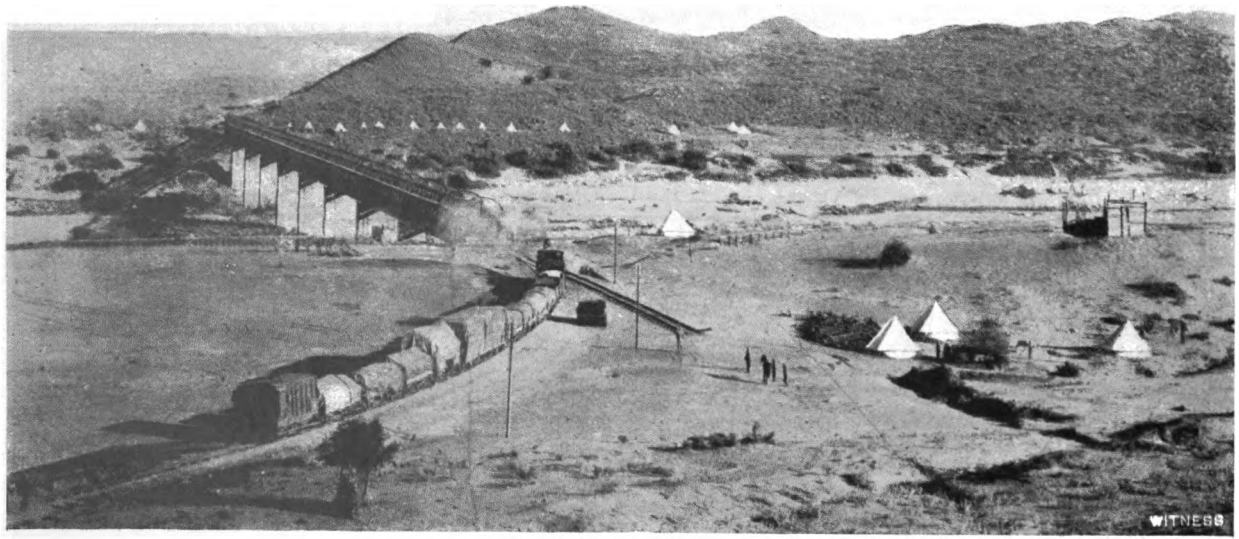

BRIDGE ACROSS THE FAMOUS ORANGE RIVER.

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enemy is a volley fired at close range. Then it is a race for life. I have watched these patrols from a distance. I have been with them scores of times, and have experienced the uncanny feeling that, in spite of every effort, creeps over you as you proceed closer and closer to some isolated kopje. Are the Boers there or not? The tension grows keener and keener until one feels it would be a relief were the enemy to open fire. From one kopje to another the patrol has to go—taking his life in his hands—doing work, which if necessary, is one of the most dangerous, arduous, and trying, in the service; and if you are shot there is no glory attached to your memory. A lonely grave in a strange land, a brief announcement in Regimental Orders—"No. —, Trooper So-and-So, was shot on patrol to-day, and is struck off strength from this date." Soon forgotten save by those who, thousands of miles away, will await in vain the return of a brother or son. I have been there and know, and can say without exaggeration that I was glad when the enemy opened fire. The whizzing of the bullets all around, the rush for life, and the end of the suspense—the excitement of it was glorious.

Leaving the little cemetery with its slumbering dead we returned to the train, and after preparing and disposing of our evening meal, climbed into our respective trucks and made our usual preparation prior to turning in for the night. Needless to say these preparations were not very elaborate. After divesting ourselves of tunics and boots we each spread a doubled blanket on the floor of the truck to relieve the hardness somewhat. Then with a second blanket and a great-coat on top, and with a kit for a pillow, we were as comfortable as circumstances would permit. In our truck twenty-nine were packed where there was room only for about twenty-four. In order to make use of every available inch of space we were forced to lie head to feet.

Quitting Norval's Pont shortly after dark, and taking advantage of our having passed beyond what was termed the

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"danger zone," we travelled all night to Naauwpoort, where we arrrived just before 8 the next morning. From here a run of three hours, in a north-westerly direction, took us to De Aar on the Capetown-Kimberley line. A halt of two hours enabled us to purchase some groceries from a large store close to the railway station; and a number of passengers, including three ladies, travelling north in the mail train, witnessed the unique spectacle—to them—of seeing some two hundred burly New Zealanders cooking rice, rolled oats, or oatmeal, on numerous small fires lighted alongside the track.

Departing from De Aar at 1 o'clock we found ourselves, two hours later, in the "Great Karroo." Wherefore was this great wilderness of desert created? Everywhere the same empty, limitless, tawny veldt, patched with stone, with scrub, with occasional kopjes, and with desolate hills, meets the eye. At first the great unfenced wilderness appeals to the imagination; but, as hour after hour passes and there is still the same burnt-up aspect, the veldt loses its charm, and the eye hungers for a sight of green grass or cool river.

After travelling all night, daylight on the 21st saw us still in the Karroo. At half-past 7 we ran into the little station at Grootfontein, and taking advantage of a short halt, indulged in a good wash before breakfast. From here a run of six hours took us to Tows River, where our train was divided into two sections to enable us to negotiate a bad pass that wound a tortuous way for miles down from the highlands to the valley below. The run along this valley, between the towering hills, was the most enjoyable of the whole journey. The sight of the green fields, the pretty farms, and the tiny hamlets, which appeared every four or five miles, was very refreshing after our experience of the wild, dusty Karroo, with its scattered ostrich farms and changeless landscape.

Shortly after dark we arrived at Worcester, the Dutch stronghold where we were to mobilise prior to sailing for

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New Zealand. We found the Fifth Contingent in camp here. This was the first we had seen of the regiment since leaving them at Klerksdorp in December.

Thankful that our long, weary ride had ended we did not trouble to pitch tents, but spread our blankets on the ground alongside the trucks, and enjoyed our first decent sleep since leaving Klerksdorp.

Worcester, as viewed from the barren, wind-swept slope where our camp was pitched, was a huge park, girthed with a belt of blue gums. In the midst of this the gabled roofs of numerous houses, and here and there a church spire, appeared above the green trees. Penetrating the belt of gums and passing along the by-streets of the town, the old-world picturesqueness of the place was very refreshing. Old-fashioned stone houses with quaint shuttered windows and thatched roofs, most of them faced with white-wash, and many fronted with shaded verandahs, lay almost hidden with masses of green foliage. As a shelter against the sun the streets were trellised with trees —poplars, sycamores, and white blossoming laburnums, —and the air was heavy with the scent of flowers. In the main thoroughfares the buildings, including three very decent hotels, several fine churches, and many substantial shops and offices, were more up-to-date. Intermingled with these were a few of the familiar corrugated iron shanties, run mostly by Jews selling curios, karosses, ostrich feathers, and cheap jewellery. As in the by-ways, avenues of trees grew the whole length of the broad, dusty, unmetalled streets; and streams of fresh running water flowed along on either side. At the south end of the town was the native location, in which the coloured portion of the community lived. Here was a mixture of Malays, Coolies, Hottentots, Cape natives, and Kaffirs. The intermixing of these various races had produced some peculiar specimens of humanity, whose colour ranged from a sickly yellow to an ebony black.

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We remained in this sleepy little town for nearly three weeks awaiting the arrival of our details, many of whom were scattered throughout the various hospitals in the Transvaal. The weather during our stay was far from good. High winds, accompanied by occasional rain showers, prevailed, and made things very uncomfortable in camp. Fuel was at a premium; and, consequently, we did not bother much with cooking, but obtained most of our meals at private houses in the town.

On Sunday morning, the 26th, a large church parade was held in the recreation ground, and was attended by members of the Imperial Yeomanry, the Fourth and Fifth New Zealand regiments, and the permanent garrison. In the afternoon we had an issue of clothing, and were enabled to discard the well-patched and threadbare togs for something more presentable.

To while away the spare time, daily excursions were made to the outlying farms in quest of ostrich feathers and anything in the way of fruit and produce. Several football matches were also arranged between the different regiments in camp. The most important of these took place on Saturday, June 2, between a combined team, selected from the Fourth and Fifth New Zealand regiments, and a Worcester fifteen. The latter were the recognised Rugby champions of South Africa at that time, having beaten strong teams from Capetown and Kimberley; and they boasted several players that had represented their universities at Home. In the ranks of the New Zealanders were such well-known players as W. Hardham (captain), Leslie Murphy, Wm. Jude, "Bunny" Abbott (now touring Great Britain with the New Zealand footballers), Teddy Reynolds, Wilson, Peter Keith, Jock Logan, Jock M'Lean, and others whose names I cannot recall. So it was expected that a good game would result. In the first spell play was even for twenty minutes; but after this the Maorilanders had the upper hand, and they maintained it to the finish. Wilson, of the Fifth, drew

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first blood for New Zealand by potting a splendid goal. Just before the end of the spell the same player punted high, and following up fast, again secured possession, and dashed over the line near the posts. Taking the kick himself he made no error; and at half time the score read—New Zealand, 9 points; Worcester, nil. In the second spell the New Zealanders played with great dash and secured two more tries, one of which was converted. Jock Logan, of the Fourth, was responsible for these, both of them being obtained after good forward rushes. When "no side" was called, New Zealand left the field winners by 17 points to nil. The dash and the resource shown by the Colonials were a revelation to the South Africans, whose captain remarked: "If they fought as well as they played football, the Boers must have found them very hard to stop."

Regimental Orders on the evening of Thursday, June 10, contained the welcome information that the regiment would leave Worcester the following afternoon, and proceed along with the Fifth New Zealanders to Capetown, and there embark in the troopship Tagus for home. This was indeed good news; and there was much rejoicing in camp that night at the prospect of our leaving South Africa so soon.

Friday was a busy day for us. In the morning we took leave of the many friends we had made in the town; and in the afternoon we struck camp and packed and stowed away our kits in the trucks. It was nearly midnight, however, before our train finally steamed out of Worcester on the last stage of our journey to Capetown. Nine o'clock next morning found us at Paarl, a large Dutch township. From here the run down to Capetown was most enjoyable. The morning was beautifully clear and fine; and consequently we obtained, the whole way, a splendid view of the grand old Table Mountain.

Of Capetown itself we saw very little, as we were taken right through to the wharf, and then aboard the troopship.

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Here we were thanked for our services in speeches made by two generals; and Lord Kitchener's telegram, eulogising our work and granting us permission to take back two guns as trophies of war, was read to us.

After lying at anchor all night in the stream, we sailed for New Zealand next day, Sunday, June 13.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

On Board the Tagus—Home Once More.

As regards the voyage home much might be said, but little, probably, of particular interest. An over-crowded transport is not a very luxurious affair for the common soldier. The sleeping accommodation is primitive, consisting as it does of a hammock and a pair of blankets per man. These blankets had been used many times by the various troops that had travelled to and fro in the Tagus, and when issued to us were simply crawling with vermin, or "Scots Greys" as they were familiarly known on the veldt. When one has slept in a hammock a few times, and has mastered the art of arranging the blankets to prevent their falling off, a better bed could not be wished for.

The food issued to us was not of the best; but of course this was to be expected on a troopship where over seven hundred men had to be catered for.

While at Worcester two regimental bands were formed—one for the Fourth, and the other for the Fifth—at the suggestion of Colonel Davies. Funds were subscribed among the men to purchase instruments in Capetown. As there were a number of ex-bandsmen in the contingents, the formation of bands was not attended by any difficulty, the result being that we were provided with music on the promenade deck every evening; and that helped considerably to break the monotony of the sea voyage.

Soon after leaving Table Bay we ran into rough weather, which continued until we arrived at Albany. The cold was intense, and rain and sleet showers were frequent. This sudden change from the warm, dry, South African air, we

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had become accustomed to on the veldt, had a serious effect on the health of the men. Two days out, the majority had bad colds, and the barking and coughing at night was pitiful. In many cases these colds developed into something more serious; and the hospital was soon overcrowded with pneumonia patients.

On June 26 Troper Seth Kyle, of the Fourth, died, and was buried at sea the following day, Colonel Davies reading the burial service.

We arrived at Albany on the 30th, and remained three days to coal. Trooper H. Frankham was left in the hospital here suffering from meningitis, to which, on July 4, he succumbed.

The six days' run across from Albany was uninteresting. The sea was much calmer, but the weather remained exceedingly wintry. Thursday, the 10th, on a clear, cold morning, we sighted the coast-line of New Zealand once again. As we proceeded along the coast another death occurred aboard the Tagus, the victim being Private A. W. Kendall, of the Fifth Contingent. This trooper took ill on the 3rd inst., the day on which we left Albany, and lingered till we came in sight of New Zealand. It was rather hard, after passing through a trying and dangerous campaign to die when so near home.

At 3 o'clock the same afternoon we arrived off the Otago Heads and anchored. Soon after, a number of Permanent Artillerymen put off from shore, and came alongside. From them we learnt that the Tagus was not expected at Dunedin, but should have called in at the Bluff, a public reception at Invercargill having been arranged by the people of Southland. We lay outside the Heads all night, and steamed up to Port Chalmers in the morning, anchoring some distance away from the wharf to await instructions. These were not long in coming to hand, and were to the effect that the troops were to be transhipped from the Tagus to the Tutanekai and Te Anau, and sent back to the Bluff. On receipt

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of this information there was deep and widespread resentment on the part of the men at the action of the authorities in sending them from Port Chalmers to be accorded an official welcome at Invercargill. The desire of the Government to preserve faith with the Southern port and the Southern city. which had been at great pains to organise a fitting reception, did not greatly impress the troopers, as they were naturally anxious to return, with the least possible delay, to their relatives and friends. However, at 3 o'clock that afternoon the transhipment of the troops to the Te Anau and Tutanekai had been carried out; and at 5 o'clock, we were steaming back to the Bluff.

Before leaving the Tagus finally, the following farewell order of our commanding officer, Lieut.-colonel Davies, was read to the assembled men and officers of the two regiments:—

"It is with very great regret that I realise that the time has come when I must say good-bye to the Fourth New Zealand regiment, which I have had the honour to command for nearly twelve months, and also to the Fifth New Zealand regiment, with which I have been associated during the campaign, and which has been under my command during the voyage from South Africa. I have to thank you, one and all, for the cheerful and willing obedience and assistance to orders, which has made my duties on board a pleasure to me. By your devotion to your duties and cheerful endurance under inclement weather, my command throughout the campaign has been made very pleasant to me; and should the necessity for your services on the battlefield again arise, I can wish for no better fortune than to again command the same gallant men. As your commanding officer I must say good-bye, though I trust I shall meet you all in New Zealand. May you find your friends well and happy, your private affairs prosperous. May you, one and all, enjoy the very best of health and good luck in future.

"—R. H. DAVIES, Lieut.-colonel Commanding Fourth New Zealand Rough Riders."

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The Tutanekai arrived off the Bluff at 6 a.m. on Friday, and was followed, half an hour later, by the Te Anau. Notwithstanding the early hour and the sharp morning air, the tug Theresa Ward came out to meet us, with the Bluff band aboard, and escorted us to the wharf. Eight o'clock saw the troops disembarked and lined up on the wharf, where we had some difficulty in keeping ourselves warm, standing as we were on the slippery planks.

From the wharf the men were marched to the Post Office, and drawn up on two sides of an improvised stand; and behind them a great crowd assembled. It was about 9 o'clock when the Mayor of the Bluff mounted the platform, accompanied by the Hon. Wm. Mills, Colonel Pole-Penton, the ex-Mayor of Dunedin (Mr R. Chisholm), Messrs M'Nab, M.H.R., M. Gilfedder, M.H.R., and J. F. M. Fraser, Capt. F. Stronach, the local executive, and others. The troops were lined up in the street, in their overcoats, and underwent the ordeal of an hour's speechifying. After Chaplain-captain Bates had offered up a short prayer of thanksgiving for the safe return of the troops, the Mayor (Mr Reid), the Hon. Mr Mills, Colonel Pole-Penton, Messrs G. L. Denniston (Mayor of Dunedin), J. F. M. Fraser, M. Gilfedder, M.H.R., M'Nab, M.H.R., and R. Chisholm, made speeches welcoming both regiments. Colonel Davies, in reply, thanked them on behalf of the Fourth and Fifth for the excellent reception they had given the troops.

At Invercargill we were met by a scene of indescribable enthusiasm. Flags and streamers of bunting waved from every building; and the people cheered our arrival from every window, balcony, and roof in the vicinity. More speechifying here. The Rev. J. A. Luxford opened with prayer, the Ven. Archdeacon Stocker preached a short sermon; a choir of ladies, on the lawn at the rear of the official stand, sang the Hundredth Psalm; and then the service was concluded by the Rev. T. H. Lyon's pronouncing the benediction. His Excellency, Lord Ranfurly, in a capital speech, officially

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welcomed the Contingents back to New Zealand. The Mayor of Invercargill (Mr Longuet) also welcomed the troops back on behalf of the people of Invercargill and Southland; and after this we marched through the town to the Zealandia Hall, where we were entertained at lunch, and listened to still more speechifying.

In the afternoon a sports meeting was arranged for our benefit; and, while present at it, the members of C and D Squadrons of the Fourth were presented with war medals by Lord Ranfurly.

That night there was a general illumination of public and private buildings; and great crowds thronged the streets all the evening. Altogether the warmth and generosity of the welcome extended to us by the people of Invercargill went far to make up for our disappointment at being sent back 150 miles from the port of our arrival in the colony.

At 8 o'clock next morning, Saturday, July the 13th, the troops entrained, and left on the journey to Dunedin. At all the small stations, as the train ran through snow-clad Southland, were knots of settlers gathered to welcome us back. So on to Gore, where the arrival of the train was the signal for warm cheering from a crowd that filled the station. As the train steamed northward into country that still showed the effect of recent snows, and as the day grew warmer, the cordiality of the welcome became more pronounced. Not only at the centres of population were we greeted with enthusiasm, but the occupants of all the cattages and station platforms passed *en route* waved and cheered as the train rushed by. To the troopers it was a genuinely hearty home-coming, and few of us but what were touched by its obvious sincerity and by its universality.

Dunedin was reached at half-past 3, and as the train steamed into the station, a tremendous and prolonged cheer went up from the immense gathering of people assembled to witness our return. The troops disembarked immediately,

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and lining up on the platform, were marched out into the open square, where they were formally welcomed by His Worship the Mayor (Mr G. L. Denniston), on behalf of the city. The impatient friends and relatives of the men then broke into the enclosure, and overwhelmed them with the effusiveness of a welcome begotten of the ties of kinship and affection. The crowds in the streets soon followed, and in a few minutes the returned troopers were being taken off to all parts of the town.

Next day (Sunday) the Northern squadrons re-embarked in the Tagus, and left Port Chalmers for their respective destinations.

Thus did the Fourth New Zealand regiment return from the war, diminished in numbers, many broken in health, and all shewing signs of the arduous campaign they had gone through in South Africa.

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ROLL AND LIST OF PROMOTIONS

—OF THE—

FOURTH NEW ZEALAND ROUGH RIDERS REGIMENT.

Staff: In Command.—Major F. W. Francis, V.D.; from March. 1900, till August, 1900. (Promoted Lieut.-colonel.) Major R. H. Davies; from August, 1900, till July, 1901. (Promoted Lieut.-colonel, C.B.)

Surgeon-captains.—James H. Neil and J. Watt.

Officers Attached.—Captain E. Davey, Lieut. R. J. S. Seddon.

Veterinary-surgeons.—J. M. Edgar, and R. A. Young.

Surgeons' Assistant.—Corporal C. R. Spragg.

No. 9 COMPANY A SQUADRON.

Regt. No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
	Captain H. F. Fulton (In Command)	
	Lieut. J. H. Keddell	
	,, J. R. MacDonald	
	,, J. M. Nicolson	Captain
1151—	Quarter-master Sergt. W. E. Christie	R.Q.M.S.
1041—	Sergt.-major A. E. Shalders	
1061—	Sergt. E. Jolly	Lieutenant
1065—	,, G. A. Ross	
1056—	,, D. A. Hickey	Regt. S.M.
1060—	,, F. H. Collis	
1049—	,, H. White	R.Q.M.S.
1097—	Farrier-sergt. R. Smeaton	
1008—	Corp. W. Allan	Sergeant

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Regt. No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1053—	Corp. A. W. Roberts	Regt. S.M.
1085—	,, C. Newman	Sergeant
1055—	,, W. A. Bowling	Sergt.-major
1028—	Lance Corp. S. L. Jones	Corporal
1025—	,, ,, E. S. Orbell	Orderly Sergt.
1098—	Farrier W. Lorrigan	
1051—	,, W. H. Spain	
1100—	,, G. Orange	
1070—	Saddler A. E. Thurlow	King's Corporal
1091—	Bugler W. Cheesman	
1568—	Private W. Allen	
1152—	,, E. W. Baxter	
1087—	,, H. Bayley	
1040—	,, G. M. Bowers	
1047—	,, D. Bowie	
1019—	,, J. G. Brown	
1068—	,, W. N. Brown	
1060—	,, W. H. Buckland	Corporal
1017—	,, W. E. Bunting	
1016—	,, C. D. Burgess	
1567—	,, W. C. Callaghan	
1050—	,, S. Cairns	
1023—	,, C. Carpenter	Corporal
1020—	,, A. Clarke	
1066—	,, J. A. C. Clyma	
1074—	,, R. Condon	
1062—	,, D. M. Corson	
1014—	,, D. R. Corson	
1021—	,, C. N. A. Cornish	
1037—	,, R. F. Crawford	
1569—	,, M. Crean	
1800—	,, A. S. Cunningham	
1427—	,, J. T. Cunningham	
1083—	,, C. S. Dalgleish	
1043—	,, H. J. Dowle	
1155—	,, R. A. Drinnan	King's Corporal
1002—	,, W. R. Duffy	
1048—	,, C. S. Duff	
1012—	,, A. Duncan	
1072—	,, J. Dungey	
1044—	,, J. Edgar	
1034—	,, W. J. Fallowfield	
1405—	,, G. N. F. Findlater	

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Regt. No.		Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1007—	Private	D. F. Gibson	
1095—	,,	J. B. Grant	
1024—	,,	J. Gray	
1076—	,,	W. Harris	
1015—	,,	J. P. Heenan	
1079—	,,	T. Hogg	Farrier Sergt.
1067—	,,	T. W. Holden	
1003—	,,	D. M. Jack	
1570—	,,	W. T. Joll	
1082—	,,	J. Jones	
1088—	,,	S. Kyle	
1077—	,,	J. R. Lamont	Corporal
1073—	,,	S. Lousley	
1018—	,,	J. I. Low	Corporal
1013—	,,	J. C. McLean	Corporal
1086—	,,	H. J. Macdonald	
1010—	,,	J. T. McDonald	
1009—	,,	W. McKenzie	
1001—	,,	W. P. McKerrow	
1153—	,,	J. A. Mathie	Corporal
1058—	,,	W. M. Matthewson	
1071—	,,	T. Mee	
1059—	,,	J. R. Melville	
1052—	,,	J. G. H. Moore	
1090—	,,	W. G. Morrison	
1026—	,,	T. J. Morton	
1035—	,,	J. A. Palmer	
1038—	,,	T. Popham	
1150—	,,	A. W. Porteous	
1075—	,,	A. J. Roberts	
1032—	,,	Jno. Ross	
1022—	,,	W. J. M. Ross	
1064—	,,	J. Rumble	King's Corporal
1081—	,,	J. Salter	
1042—	,,	H. Shalders	
1031—	,,	R. Simmers	
1029—	,,	G. F. Smith	
1030—	,,	S. A. D. G. Smith	
1063—	,,	T. Smith	
1057—	,,	J. Sorenson	
1089—	,,	A. F. Stock	
1039—	,,	W. W. Stringer	
1027—	,,	W. T. Sullivan	

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Regt. No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1005—	Private J. Sutherland	
1011—	,, F. Swanwick	
1036—	,, L. C. Tennant	
1096—	,, R. M. Thomson	
1154—	,, A. Thompson	
1004—	,, B. Thompson	
1084—	,, D. Turner	Corporal
1571—	,, G. Thornton	
1521—	,, B. Veale	
1054—	,, C. K. Ward	
1078—	,, R. H. Ward	
1093—	,, J. D. Watt	Corporal
1033—	,, A. West	
1094—	,, E. White	
1006—	,, G. Williams	
1046—	,, C. Wyse	

No. 10 COMPANY B SQUADRON.

	Captain John Allen Harvey (In Command)	
	Lieut. J. Ross	
	,, Arthur Bauchop	Captain
	,, Robert G. Tubman	
1157—	Sergt.-major W. Jickell	Lieutenant
1162—	Farrier-sergt. Joseph Mead	Farrier-major
1105—	Sergt. A. H. Challis	
1101—	,, Ernest Hunter	
1534—	,, C. G. Saxby	Lieutenant
1550—	,, A. Read	
1566—	,, K. N. Duncan	
1149—	Corp. J. Gouk	
1108—	,, Leslie Murphy	Sergt.-major
1540—	,, H. T. Heckler	Sergeant
1539—	,, W. S. Woof	
1561—	Farrier D. H. Cameron	
1156—	,, D. McKnight	
1099—	,, W. J. Lawrence	
1511—	Saddler J McKay	
1092—	Bugler R. W. Wilkinson	
1133—	Private Alexander	
1134—	,, H. E. S. Banks	
1140—	,, John Banks	

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Regt. No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1119—	Private C. Bates	
1163—	,, P. C. Best	
1113—	,, R. Bissett	
1164—	,, H. B. Bolton	
1158—	,, W. S. Bovey	
1161—	,, H. W. Bright	
1154—	,, E. S. Bone	
1371—	,, Oscar Bottom	
1565—	,, L. E. Brathwaite	Corporal
1117—	,, J. Cameron	
1141—	,, D. Cameron	
1121—	,, H. W. Campbell	
1558—	,, W. McClunie	
1159—	,, W. F. Cresswell	
1529—	,, D. Condon	
1310—	,, C. G. Carey	
1314—	,, W. Connolly	
1103—	,, P. Dawson	
1138—	,, G. F. H. Day	
1139—	,, David Dickson	
1146—	,, R. Donnelly	
1532—	,, J. T. Doreen	
1143—	,, T. Ford	
1536—	,, Geo. Fuszard	
1525—	,, W. W. Frith	
1309—	,, D. Fitzgerald	
1135—	,, J. Gibb	Corporal
1160—	,, W. J. Gorrie	Sergeant
1563—	,, F. R. Goullet	
1549—	,, A. Gilmour	
1307—	,, F. W. D. Gray	
1115—	,, W. Harris	
1126—	,, J. G. Hazlett	Sergeant
1128—	,, Joseph Hazlett	
1118—	,, Thomas Horrobin	
1559—	,, R. C. Hopkins	
1538—	,, H. J. Hawkins	
1533—	,, E. A. Howell	
1535—	,, C. A. Hirtzell	
1553—	,, C. Hooper	
1327—	,, W. Hebberley	
1107—	,, W. H. Jude	Corporal
1556—	,, O. G. Johnston	

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Regt. No.		Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1526—	Private	J. E. Johnston	
1148—	,,	R. J. Kelly	Corporal
1114—	,,	A. Keown	
1537—	,,	R. C. Lacey	Corporal
1145—	,,	Geo. Lawson	
1547—	,,	R. E. Lean	
1380—	,,	J. P. Lines	
1106—	,,	J. W. Logan	
1370—	,,	R. Maud	
1801—	,,	Thos. Murray	
1802—	,,	A. J. H. Macfarlane	
1511—	,,	J. T. Mackay	
1803—	,,	A. J. Maclaine	R.O.M.S.
1130—	,,	Thos. McKenzie	
1109—	,,	R. McAuley	
1112—	,,	J. J. McAuley	
1110—	,,	H. McKenzie	
1123—	,,	Claude McGregor	
1124—	,,	A. E. McDonald	
1125—	,,	Donald McIntosh	
1129—	,,	A. McEwen	
1132—	,,	A. McKellor	
1142—	,,	J. R. McLaren	
1147—	,,	W. L. Milne	
1137—	,,	Jas. D. Maloney	
1102—	,,	A. Morrison	
1526—	,,	H. Nicholls	
1557—	,,	J. Orr	
1548—	,,	E. S. Pettit	
1555—	,,	H. N. Parsons	
1390—	,,	W. Porter	
1530—	,,	E. Patten	
1067—	,,	T. Quinn	
1127—	,,	J. Robertson	
1322—	,,	H. C. Rainbow	
1527—	,,	A. G. Simpson	
1524—	,,	J. Satterthwaite	
1523—	,,	S. W. Smith	
1313—	,,	E. H. Smith	
1372—	,,	R. E. Smith	
1120—	,,	D. K. Smith	
1552—	,,	J. W. Scott	Farrier-sergeant
1804—	,,	O. F. Stokes	Acting Sergt.

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Regt. No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1136—	Private J. Sheehan	
1104—	,, E. H. Smoothy	
1116—	,, D. Stalker	
1122—	,, J. Stevenson	
1131—	,, W. Templeton	
1546—	,, W. Terrill	
1320—	,, W. D. Thompson	
1373—	,, H. Vinsen	
1541—	,, J. Vaughan	
1564—	,, E. Wells	
1144—	,, Albert E. Ward	
1111—	,, J. Williams	

No. 7 COMPANY C SQUADRON.

Captain J. Pringle (In Command)
Lieut. M. B. Elder
,, R. W. G. Collins
,, W. F. J. Ross

1318—	Sergt.-major C. Guy Powles	Lieutenant
1315—	Quarter-master Sergt. W. J. Mason	R.Q.M.S.
1251—	Farrier Sergt. W. J. Hardham	Farrier-major
1274—	Sergt. H. Fraser	Sergt.-major
1269—	,, E. M. Grant	
1343—	,, T. G. H. Twistleton	
1347—	,, J. B. Vallance	
1263—	,, C. Colebrook	
1283—	,, H. Riddick	
1287—	Corp. D. R. Hewitt	Accepted an Imp. Com.
1325—	,, G. H. F. Rolleston	Lieutenant
1369—	,, A. W. Renall	
1290—	,, F. Hall	
1288—	,, J. R. Orford	
1333—	,, G. D. H. Smith	
1285—	Bugler J. A. Hickling	
1393—	,, C. B. Welsby	
1392—	Saddler W. G. Greenough	
1284—	,, S. Harland	
1300—	Farrier T. Merson	
1294—	,, C. Retter	
1314—	,, C. W. Ridley	
1250—	Private W. L. Armstrong	
1510—	,, J. Baghurst	

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Regt. No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1257—	Private W. J. Baghurst	
1285—	,, A. J. Baker	
1252—	,, W. F. Bell	
1393—	,, W. J. Blissett	
1256—	,, A. J. Boddington	
1255—	,, H. M. Boddington	
1253—	,, C. W. Boyd	
1261—	,, S. G. Broadbent	
1254—	,, C. W. Brown	
1302—	,, R. A. Cameron	
1264—	,, H. J. Carter	
1262—	,, J. N. Carver	
1316—	,, A. Chambers	Corporal
1362—	,, John W. Davies	
1270—	,, J. M. C. Devery	
1259—	,, W. Dineen	
1267—	,, F. N. Dixon	
1268—	,, N. Dixon	
1272—	,, C. B. Easther	
1275—	,, J. Fletcher	Corporal
1273—	,, W. R. J. Franklyn	
1360—	,, T. J. Gardiner	Lieutenant Q.M.
1512—	,, W. J. Groves	
1281—	,, F. H. Hill	
1298—	,, W. A. Hart	
1282—	,, J. Hill	
1286—	,, R. P. Houghton	
1292—	,, A. C. R. Isherwood	
1336—	,, C. F. Jackson	
1296—	,, R. M. Keeling	
1295—	,, D. A. Kerr	
1291—	,, C. A. Le Sueur	
1297—	,, H. Kerr	
1299—	,, R. Lyon	
1280—	,, S. L. Matthews	
1508—	,, E. H. Maunsell	
1306—	,, A. A. T. Monaghan	
1506—	,, T. Monkley	
1323—	,, A. McArtney	
1311—	,, P. McDonald	
1305—	,, S. MacDougall	
1317—	,, W. MacDougall	
1279—	,, D. S. McGregor	

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Regt. No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1283—	Private D. Mc. McIntyre	
1312—	,, M. Mc. McIntyre	
1304—	,, K. D. McKenzie	
1308—	,, Arch. McPhee	
1340—	,, Alexander McPhee	
1301—	,, J. McPae	Q.M.S.
1266—	,, N. E. Osborne	
1319—	,, E. Pearce	
1265—	,, B. Penny	
1260—	,, J. Rentoul	
1328—	,, A. J. Rusden	
1339—	,, A. M. Samuel	
1332—	,, E. J. Saunders	
1335—	,, J. F. H. Saxon	
1338—	,, D. Scown	
1303—	,, F. Sexton	
1337—	,, E. R. Sheehan	
1331—	,, W. M. Simcox	
1341—	,, M. R. Smith	
1334—	,, W. M. Stack	
1329—	,, H. A. Stephens	
1330—	,, R. Sutherland	
1277—	,, H. Sycamore	
1345—	,, E. P. Tapper	
1344—	,, F. H. Taylor	
1355—	,, T. Trengrove	
1527—	,, O. H. Tully	
1346—	,, H. H. Udy	
1276—	,, E. A. Vennel	
1359—	,, G. T. Vile	
1350—	,, G. A. Walker	Corporal
1353—	,, A. I. Wallace	
1352—	,, B. E. Westmoreland	
1355—	,, G. White	
1356—	,, E. Willoughby	
1271—	,, A. Woodward	
1342—	,, R. C. Wright	
1326—	,, R. Wylie	
1501—	,, H. M. Yorke	
1361—	,, A. J. Young	Q.M.S.
1278—	,, W. Young	

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No. 8 COMPANY—D SQUADRON.

Regt. No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
	Captain G. H. Walker (In Command)	
	Lieut. W. J. A. Thompson	
	,, G. F. Johnston	
	,, B. Arthur	
1400	Sergt.-major C. E. Browne	
1401	,, ,, T. Dawson	Accepted Com. with 1st Border Regiment.
1407	Saddler-sergt W. A. Craig	
1402	Sergt. J. L. Long	
1403	,, W. A. Hickson	
1404	,, G. Steele	
1405	,, J. D. G. Shera	
1384	,, F. S. Barton	Sergt.-major
1388	,, C. W. E. Cribb	
1408	Corp. J. E. Alexander	
1411	,, C. O. Phair	Sergeant
1410	,, W. H. Newdick	Sergeant
1409	,, J. A. Colledge	
1424	,, E. C. Clarke	
1455	Sergt. S. A. J. Paynter	
1406	Farrier G. R. Wilkinson	
1496	,, M. Newsome	
1470	,, W. Thomson	
1435	,, G. Henderson	
1446	Saddler G. S. McHardy	
1412	Bugler C. G. Macindoe	Bugler Sergt.
1464	,, H. E. Salmon	
1517	Private E. A. Alger	
1414	,, H. S. Atkinson	
1415	,, E. A. Bailey	Farrier
1416	,, C. C. Berry	
1417	,, B. R. Bollond	
1381	,, G. Bougen	
1418	,, W. B. Bradshaw	
1420	,, J. S. Brown	
1385	,, D. S. Bruce	
1382	,, F. O. Bruce	
1419	,, R. E. H. Burnett	
1422	,, H. G. Cameron	
1423	,, M. Canavan	
1425	,, J. Condon	

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Regt. No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1436—	Private H. R. S. Corlett	Corporal
1394—	,, J. H. Critchley	
1491—	,, G. Currie	
1429—	,, E. Davis	
1428—	,, M. L. Davies	
1377—	,, J. Davidson	
1430—	,, H. Draper	
1498—	,, C. Dunford	
1490—	,, J. H. Ferris	
1431—	,, P. C. Firth	
1480—	,, H. Frankham	
1376—	,, R. H. Fraser	
1518—	,, A. T. W. Gannon	Corporal
1432—	,, W. R. Gibson	
1433—	,, E. Goodwin	
1434—	,, W. S. Harris	
1439—	,, V. S. Hattaway	
1436—	,, J. C. W. Hill	
1437—	,, G. Holden	
1438—	,, W. Hubbard	
1440—	,, A. E. Jackson	
1441—	,, J. F. Jackson	
1502—	,, M. Johnson	
1442—	,, P. Keith	
1386—	,, J. Laugham	
1543—	,, J. F. Mackley	
1444—	,, W. P. Mandeno	
1709—	,, T. O. Martin	
1479—	,, R. Meredith	
1449—	,, A. F. Miller	
1447—	,, W. Millar	
1443—	,, J. F. Moonlight	Corporal
1448—	,, C. C. Munro	
1445—	,, G. W. McEwen	
1531—	,, J. H. McMillan	
1450—	,, F. Mc. Nightingale	
1451—	,, W. J. O'Dowd	King's Sergeant
1452—	,, W. Olive	
1453—	,, H. B. Paton	
1454—	,, J. C. Paton	
1387—	,, F. C. Peakman	
1456—	,, G. B. Peacocke	
1457—	,, R. Pearce	

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Regt No.	Name and Rank.	Promoted.
1458—	Private J. Pile	
1459—	,, C. W. Power	
1460—	,, H. Robinson	
1461—	,, K. Ross	
1462—	,, W. Ruddell	
1463—	,, J. L. Runciman	
1504—	,, J. A. Rogers	
1378—	,, F. C. Sharp	
1467—	,, J. C. Sorenson	
1465—	,, E. E. Sutherland	
1466—	,, A. C. Suttie	
1395—	,, M. L. Sundin	
1468—	,, J. Swann	
1472—	,, J. Tanner	
1469—	,, H. N. Taylor	
1389—	,, J. P. Thomson	
1471—	,, W. Topp	
1473—	,, W. E. Warburton	
1474—	,, C. W. Wheeler	
1374—	,, J. J. Whitehead	Corporal
1475—	,, W. J. Wigmore	
1476—	,, G. Wilkins	
1477—	,, W. Withers	
1478—	,, F. W. Wylie	King's Corporal
1375—	,, J. Walker	Sergeant
1379—	,, F. C. Burch	

DECORATIONS AND AWARDS.

VICTORIA CROSS.

Regt. No.

1283—Farrier-major W. J. Hardham.—Near Cypherfontein, January 28, 1901; brought a wounded comrade out of fire on his horse, himself running beside him.

ORDER OF THE BATH (COMPANION OF).

Major R. H. Davies.

MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES FOR VALUABLE SERVICES RENDERED.

Captain A. Bauchop—For plucky action in rescuing wounded man at Spitzkop on 11th February, 1901.

Captain G. H. Walker.
Captain B. Arthur } For excellent services rendered by them in the capture of De La Rey's guns and convoy, March 24, 1901. Capt. G. H. Walker awarded D.S.O., April 23, 1901

Captain H. T. Fulton.—For excellent services rendered while with the regiment. Awarded the D.S.O.

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1451—Corp. W. J. O'Dowd.
1064—Private J. Rumble.
1055—Private R. A. Drinnan

Private Rumble charged a gun, closely followed by Drinnan and O'Dowd. They were met by a heavy fire from the gunners, Rumble's coat being shot through; also Drinnan's hat. They took the gun; 24th March, 1901. O'Dowd promoted Sergt., and Rumble and Drinnan Corporals by Commander-in-Chief.

1079—Private A. E. Thurlow.—Conspicuous for his energy in turning round waggons of convoy under fire, and sending them back to rear. Promoted Corporal by Commander-in-Chief.

1478—Private F. W. Wylie.—Charged a gun by himself. It was defended by four of the enemy, two of whom he killed, and then captured the gun; March 24, 1901. Promoted Corporal by Commander-in-Chief.

1386—Private J. Langham.—Brought to notice by Major-general Babington for conduct in capture of guns and convoy at Vaal Bank on March 23 and 24, 1901. Awarded Distinguished Conduct Medal.

1375—Sergeant J. Walker.—For capture, single handed, of three armed Boers in a farm near Standerton.

1019—Private J. G. Brown.—For plucky action in taking back a horse under heavy fire to a dismounted trooper.

MENTIONED IN DESPATCHES FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICES.

Major R. H. Davies, Lieut. A. Bauchop, Lieut. G. H. R. Rolleston, 1145 Corporal C. Lacey, 1142 Private J. R. McLaren, 1032 Private J. Ross, 1082 Private Jas. Jones.

KILLED IN ACTION.

Regt. No.	Name.	Place.	Date.
	Captain John Allen Harvey,	Ottoshoop,	August 16, 1900.
	Captain and Adjutant Arbuthnot,	Ottoshoop,	August 20, 1900.
1305	Private S. McDougall,	Ottoshoop,	August 16, 1900.
1057	Private John Sorenson,	Zeerust,	October 18, 1900.

DIED OF WOUNDS.

1371—Private Oscar Bottom, Kimberley, November 10, 1900.

ACCIDENTALLY KILLED.

1031—Private J. Salter, drowned, December 29, 1900.
1080—Sergt. F. Collis, drowned, Waitati, New Zealand.
1035—Private J. A. Palmer, killed by gun explosion, Wellington, New Zealand, October, 190[illegible].

DIED OF DISEASE.

Lieut.-colonel Francis, V.D., Christchurch, N.Z., March 31, 1901.
1335—Private J. F. H. Saxon, Beira, June 19, 1900.

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Regt.
No.
1125—Private D. F. McIntosh, Umtali, June 5, 1900.
1501— ,, H. N. Yorke, Kimberley, November 30, 1900.
1700— ,, T. O. Martin, Pretoria, January 17, 1901.
1054— ,, C. K. Ward, Johannesburg, January 1, 1901.
1062— ,, D. M. Corson, Krugersdorp, February 25, 1901.
1077—Corp. J. Lamont, Potchefstroom, March 21, 1901.
1163—Private C. Best, March 26, 1901.
1380— ,, J. P. Lines, Johannesburg, April 28, 1901.
1280— ,, S. L. Matthews, Capetown, June 11, 1901.
1088— ,, Seth Kyle, at sea, June 26, 1901.
1480— ,, H. Frankham, Albany, July 4, 1901.
1015— ,, J. P. Heenan, Dunedin, August 18, 1901.
1038— ,, Thos. Popham, Middlemarch, New Zealand.
1476— ,, Geo. Wilkins, Auckland, New Zealand.
1344— ,, F. H. Taylor, Eltham, New Zealand.
1512— ,, J. W. Groves, New Zealand.
1135—Corp. J. Gibb, Edendale, New Zealand.

OFFICERS, NON-COMS., AND MEN WHO WERE WOUNDED IN ACTION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

Captain Fulton
Lieut. R. W. G. Collins
1408—Corp. J. B. Alexander
1056—Sergt. D. A. Hickey
1112—Private J. J. McAuley
1373— ,, W. H. Vinsen
1323— ,, A. McArtney
1005— ,, J. Sutherland
1164— ,, H. B. Bolton
1013— ,, J. C. McLean
1423— ,, M. Canavan
1414— ,, H. S. Atkinson
1075— ,, A. J. Roberts
1072— ,, J. Dungey
1468— ,, J. Swann
1458— ,, J. Pile
1297— ,, H. Keir
1462— ,, W. Ruddell
1258— ,, A. J. Baker
1061—Sergt.-major E. Jolly
1254—Private C. W. Brown
Lieut. J. H. Keddell
1312—Private M. Mc. McIntyre
1460— ,, H. Robinson
1152— ,, E. Baxter
1094— ,, E. White
1301— ,, J. McRae

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